The Confessions

OF

S. AUGUSTINE

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The Confessions

OF

S. AUGUSTINE

TEN BOOKS

Translated and Edited

BY THE

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BOOK III.

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His shame at having been a Manichæan from nineteen to eight-and-twenty, and because he had drawn others into the same error; also that he had consulted astrologers: meanwhile his friend was snatched away by death, whereupon he gave way to inordinate grief; he relates his remarkable conversion and death; of vain and solid friendship, and of the shortness and changeableness of all earthly things, he treats at some length; he makes mention of his books on "the Beautiful and Fitting" written by him in his twenty sixth or seventh year; also how easily he by himself gained a knowledge of the liberal sciences, and of the "Categories" of Aristotle.

BOOK V.

He describes his twenty-ninth year, in which, having discerned the ignorance of Faustus, a Manichæan, in those things in which they boasted that they possessed divine knowledge, he was led to entertain the idea of going no further in that sect. He is guided by the Providence of God to Rome, where he taught rhetoric, and thence to Milan, where he was occupied in the same way. There he heard S. Ambrose, and began to repent, and having abjured Manichæism, he determined again to become a Catechumen in the Catholic Church.

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BOOK VII.

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BOOK IX.

He determines to give up the Profession of Rhetoric, and to devote his life to God alone, but not before the Vintage Vacation, which was near at hand. In the meanwhile, in the country at Cassiacum, with his friend Verecundus, he prepares to receive the grace of Baptism; and at length, with Alypius and his son Adeodatus, he is baptized. Not long after, on his way to Africa, he reaches Ostia with his friends, and with his mother Monica, whose life and holy character he gives a short summary of. She dies there in her fifty-sixth year, and Augustine's thirty-third.

BOOK X.

Having in former books disclosed what he was before he had received the grace of Baptism; in this, he examines what he then was at the time he wrote. And first, he professes that he loves God. Then inquiring what way we must enter upon in order to know Him, he surveys all the faculties of his soul, but especially the memory; on the wonderful power of this faculty he enlarges, and shows that God deigns to dwell in it. Then he searches into the acts, thoughts, and affections, which spring from the triple temptation of pleasure, curiosity, and pride; what Christian temperance prescribes concerning each, he luminously treats. Next, on Christ as Mediator he dwells, through Whose help he trusts to be healed of all the diseases of his soul.

BOOK I.

Beginning with the praises of God, he traces his life from its earliest stages up to the age of fifteen years. He acknowledges the sins of infancy and childhood; and confesses how he was then more fond of play and boyish amusements than of study.

CHAPTER I.

He desires to praise God, being awakened by Him.

"GREAT art Thou, O Lord, and highly to be praised."[1] "Great is Thy Power, and Thy Wisdom is infinite."[2] And man, but a fraction of Thy creation, desires to praise Thee; man—encompassed with his mortality, bearing about with him an evidence of his sin, an evidence, too, that "Thou resistest the proud,"[3]—yet even man, but a fraction of Thy creation, desires to praise Thee. Thou dost stir us up to delight in praising Thee; for Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our heart can find no rest until it rests in Thee. Grant me, O Lord, to know and understand which should be the first, whether to call upon Thee or to praise Thee; and again, whether to know Thee or to call upon Thee. But who can call upon Thee, not knowing Thee? For he who does not know Thee may call upon Thee, having a mistaken idea of Thee. Or should we not rather call upon Thee in order to know Thee? But "how then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? or how shall they

[1] Ps. cxlv. 3. [2] Ps. cxlvii. 5. [3] Jam. iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5.

believe without a preacher?"[1] And "they shall praise the Lord that seek Him."[2] For "they that seek, shall find Him,"[3] and those who find shall praise Him. I will seek Thee, O Lord, calling upon Thee; and I will call upon Thee, believing in Thee; for Thou hast been preached to us. My faith, O Lord, calls on Thee, that faith which Thou hast given to me, with which Thou hast inspired me, through the Incarnation of Thy Son, through the ministry of Thy preacher.[4]

CHAPTER II.

That the God Whom he invokes is in him, and that he is in God.

AND how shall I call upon my God,—my God and Lord? For when I shall call upon Him, I shall be calling Him to come to me. And what room is there in me, where my God may come into me? where God may come into me, the God Who made heaven and earth? Is there, then, O Lord my God, anything in me, that can contain Thee? Do heaven, indeed, and earth, which Thou hast made, and in which Thou hast made me, contain Thee? or, because whatever exists cannot exist without Thee, does it follow that whatever exists contains Thee? Since, then, I also exist, why do I ask Thee to come to me, when I could have no being, unless Thou wert already in me? For I am not now in hell, and yet Thou art even there. For "if I go down into hell, Thou art

[1] Rom. x. 14. [2] Ps. xxii. 27. [3] Matt. vii. 7.

[4] *He refers to the* preaching of S. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan. *See Bk. V. chap. xiii.*

there."[1] Therefore I could not exist, O my God, I could not have any being, unless Thou wert in me; or, rather, I could not have any being, unless I were in Thee, "of Whom are all things, by Whom are all things, in Whom are all things."[2] Even so, O Lord, even so. Whither then do I call Thee, when I am in Thee? or, whence canst Thou come to me? For whither can I withdraw myself beyond heaven and earth, that there may be intervening space through which my God may come to me, Who hath said, "I fill heaven and earth"?[3]

CHAPTER III.

God is so wholly everywhere, that nothing contains Him wholly.

DO heaven and earth contain Thee, since Thou fillest them? or, dost Thou fill them, without exhausting Thyself, since they do not contain Thee? And when heaven and earth are filled, where dost Thou pour what remains of Thee? or, hast Thou no need to be contained by anything, Who containest all things, seeing that what Thou fillest, Thou fillest by containing it? For the vessels which are filled by Thee, do not sustain Thee; since, although they were broken, Thou wouldst not be poured forth. And when Thou art "poured out"[4] upon us, Thou art not cast down, but Thou raisest us up; neither art Thou Thyself scattered, but Thou gatherest us. But Thou Who fillest all things, fillest Thou all things with Thy whole self? or, since

[1] *Ps.* cxxxix. 8.
[2] Rom. xi. 36.
[3] *Jer.* xxiii. 24.
[4] Acts ii. 18.

all things cannot contain Thee wholly, do they contain a part of Thee, and all at once the same part? or, does each enclose its own part, the greater more, the smaller less? Then is there one part of Thee greater, and another less. Or art Thou wholly everywhere, and does nothing contain Thee wholly?

CHAPTER IV.

The Majesty of God and His Perfections, are beyond description.

WHAT art Thou then, my God? what, I ask, but the Lord God? "For who is Lord but the Lord? or who is God save our God?"[1] O most High, most Good, most Powerful, most Omnipotent, most Merciful and most Just, most Hidden and most Present, most Beautiful and most Strong, Stable yet Incomprehensible; changeless Thyself, yet changing all things; never old, never new; making all things new, and "making old the proud, and they know it not;"[2] ever working, ever at rest; gathering, and not needing; upholding, and filling, and overshadowing; creating and nourishing and perfecting; seeking, yet never lacking anything. Thou lovest, without passion; Thou art jealous, without alarm; Thou repentest, without sorrow; Thou art angry, without emotion; Thou changest Thy works, without ever altering Thy design; Thou receivest back what Thou findest, without ever having lost; Thou art never poor, yet rejoicing in gains; never avaricious, yet exacting *usury;*[3] *Thou* receivest over and above, that Thou

[1] *Ps. xviii. 31.* [2] Job ix. 5. [3] Matt. xxv. 27.

mayest be indebted, and yet—who has anything which is not already Thine own? Thou payest debts, owing nothing; Thou forgivest debts, losing nothing. And what is all that has been said, my God, my life, my sweet and holy joy? or what can any say, when one speaks of Thee? And woe to those who are silent about Thee; since but dumb are even those who speak much.

CHAPTER V.

He seeks the Love of God, and Pardon for his Offences.

OH! that I might find rest in Thee. Oh! that Thou wouldest come into my heart, and inebriate it, that I may forget my troubles and embrace Thee, my only good. What art Thou to me? Let Thy Mercy suffer me to speak. What am I to Thee that Thou commandest me to love Thee, and art angry with me unless I do love Thee, and dost threaten me with great miseries? Is it then a slight one not to love Thee? Ah me! tell me, for Thy Mercies' sake, O Lord my God, what Thou art to me. "Say unto my soul, I am thy Salvation."[1] So speak, that I may hear. Behold, the ears of my heart, O Lord, are before Thee; open them, and "say unto my soul, I am thy Salvation." Let me run after this voice, and lay hold on Thee. Hide not Thou Thy Face from me. Let me die, that I may see Thy Face, lest I die.

Narrow is the house of my soul for Thee to enter into it; let it be expanded by Thee. It is ruinous; rebuild it. There is in it that which is

[1] Ps. xxxv. 3.

offensive in Thy sight, I know and confess; but who shall cleanse it? or, to whom else should I cry but to Thee—"Lord, cleanse Thou me from my secret faults, and from those of others spare Thy servant."[1] "I believe, and therefore do I speak;"[2] Lord, Thou knowest. "Have I not confessed against myself my offences unto Thee, my God; and Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my heart?"[3] I do not contend in judgment with Thee,[4] Who art the Truth; I do not wish to deceive myself; "lest mine iniquity lie to itself."[5] Therefore I do not contend in judgment with Thee; "for if Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who shall abide it?"[6]

CHAPTER VI.

He describes his Infancy; he praises the Providence of God and His Eternity.

BUT suffer me, nevertheless, to address Thy Mercy—me, "dust and ashes."[7] Yet suffer me to speak, since it is Thy Mercy I address, not scornful man. And Thou, perhaps, mayest scorn me, but then, "Thou wilt return and have compassion on me."[8] And what is it I want to say, O Lord my God, save that I know not whence I came into this, I cannot tell whether to call it dying life or living death? And the consolations of Thy Mercies awaited me, as I have been told by the parents of my flesh—by my father and by her who bore me; for I have no remembrance

[1] Ps. xix. 12, 13. [2] Ps. cxvi. 10. [3] Ps. xxxii. 5.
[4] *Job ix. 2, 3.* [5] Ps. xxvii. 12. [6] Ps. cxxx. 3.
[7] *Gen. xviii. 27.* [8] Jer. xii. 15.

of it. Then was I soothed at my mother's breasts; but neither did my mother nor my nurses distend them with milk, but Thou through them didst supply me with the food of infancy, according to Thy appointment and Thy liberality, which extend even to the very root of things. Thou also didst give me the desire only for what Thou gavest; and didst give my nurses the desire to give me what Thou gavest them. For they, through the affection which Thou didst implant in them, were desirous to give me out of the abundance with which Thou hadst supplied them. For it was good for them that my good came from them, of which, however, they were not the source but only the channel;—from Thee, indeed, O God, are all good things, and "from my God is all my salvation."[1] This I have learned since, through inward and outward gifts by which Thou calledst to me; for then I knew only how to suck, and to rest in that which brought me bodily delight, and to cry at that which was irksome to me—nothing more.

After this I began to laugh, first in my sleep, then when I was awake. This I was told about myself, and I believed it, since we see other infants do the same; for I do not remember anything about it. And behold, by degrees I began to perceive where I was, and I wanted to make known my desires to those who could gratify them, and I could not; for my desires were within me, and they were without me, nor could they by any sense of theirs enter into my thoughts. Therefore I tossed about my limbs and uttered sounds, making the few signs I could to express my desires, though they were but a very poor

[1] 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

to find out Thee, rather than by finding them out not to find Thee.

CHAPTER VII.

Infancy also is prone to sin.

HEAR me, O God. Alas! for man's sins. And man speaks thus, and Thou hast mercy upon him; since Thou hast made him, but hast not made sin in him. Who reminds me of the sin of my infancy? "For no one in Thy sight is pure from sin,"[1] not even the infant who is but a day old. Who reminds me? Does not each little infant in whom I see what I do not remember of myself? What then was my sin at that time? Was it that crying, with open mouth I sought the breast? For if now I should in the same greedy manner catch at, not the breasts, but the food suitable to my present age, I should most justly be laughed at and rebuked. Therefore I did things then which were blameworthy, but as I could not understand those who blamed me, neither custom nor reason suffered me to be reproved; for such things as were then blameworthy, when we grow older, we ourselves uproot and cast away. Now no one in his right senses, when he purges anything,[2] throws away what is good. Or was it at that time good, to cry for that which would have been injurious to me; to be indignant and resentful with those who were not under me, free persons, my elders, and parents, and many besides, who were wiser than myself, because they would not let me have my own way; and to try as much as I could to strike and do harm to those who

[1] *Job xxv. 4.* [2] John xv. 2.

would not obey my commands, when they knew that, had they obeyed them, it would have been to my hurt? Thus in the weakness of infant limbs, and not in the disposition of infants, is their harmlessness. I myself have seen and noticed envy in a baby; it could not speak, yet it turned a pale and bitter look upon its foster-brother. Who does not know this? Mothers and nurses tell you, that they appease these things in such cases with I know not what remedies. This then is your innocence, when the fountain of milk flows richly and plentifully, not to let another who is in extreme need, and whose life depends on this one source, share it with you. But such tempers are blandly borne, not because they are of little or no consequence, but because they will disappear as the child grows older; for, although you may tolerate them in a child, you would not be able to endure them in a grown person.

Thou, therefore, O Lord my God, Who gavest life to me in infancy, and a body, which, as we see, Thou hast furnished with senses, fitted with limbs, made comely in form, and for its completeness and safety has imbued with all vital energies,—Thou commandest me to praise Thee for these things, and "to confess unto Thee, and sing unto Thy Name, O most High:"[1] because Thou art God, Almighty and Good, even if this were all that Thou hadst done, which no one else could have done but Thyself, O Thou the Only One Who givest to all things their mode of being, O Thou most Beautiful, Who givest all things their beauty, and orderest all things by Thy law. This age then, O Lord, of which I have no remembrance,

[1] Ps. xc. 1.

which I believe from what others say, and which from the sight of other infants I conjecture that I myself have passed through, although the conjecture may be very reliable, I am loath to include as one period of this life of mine which I live in this world. For it is as much lost in the darkness of oblivion as the time which I passed in my mother's womb. But if also "I was conceived in iniquity,"[1] and in sin my mother then nourished me, where, I beseech Thee, O my God, where, O Lord, or when was I, Thy servant, innocent? But, lo, I pass over that time; for why should I linger upon that which has left no footprints upon my memory?

CHAPTER VIII.

Whence when a Boy he learned to speak.

PASSING then out of infancy I arrived at childhood; or rather it came to me, and followed upon infancy. Nor did infancy depart; (for whither did it go?) and yet it ceased to be. For I was now not a speechless infant, but a talking boy. And this I do remember; and have since observed how I learned to speak. For my elders did not teach me my words in a systematic order, as soon afterwards they taught me my letters: but I myself with the mind which Thou gavest me, my God, tried to make known the desires of my heart, by means of cries and various sounds, and by various movements of my limbs, so that I might get my own will; and when I could not express all my desires, or not to all to whom I would have done so, I went over the sounds in my memory;

[1] Ps. li. 7.

when they named anything, and, as they spoke, moved towards it, I saw and retained the name of the thing, which they had uttered when they wanted to point it out. And that, indeed, they meant the thing in question, was manifest by the bodily movement, as it were by that natural language which belongs to mankind at large, which consists of expressions of the face, glances of the eyes, gestures of the body, and tones of voice indicating the affections of the mind, when it either seeks, possesses, rejects, or shuns things. Thus by frequently hearing words in various sentences, which were put in their proper order, I gradually collected for what they stood, and thereby began to express my desires, my mouth having gradually brought itself to utter them.

Thus with those amongst whom I lived, I exchanged these signs of our desires which we made known to one another, and launched deeper and deeper into the stormy society of human life, depending on parental authority and the bidding of my elders.

CHAPTER IX.

The hatred of Lessons, love of Play, and the fear of being whipped, which is in Boys.

O GOD, my God, what misery did I then experience, and what deception! when I was told that it was as a boy my right course of life to obey my teachers, in order that I might get on in this world, and excel in those rhetorical arts which lead to human honours and false riches. Then I was put to school to learn things of which I, poor boy, did not know the

use; and yet, if I was slow in learning them I was flogged: for this course was held in high repute by my elders, many of whom before us had trodden the same road, and had marked out a wearisome path, along which we were forced to go; thus multiplying the toil and pain of the sons of Adam.

But we found, O Lord, men who called upon Thee; and we learned from them to do the same, thinking of Thee, as well as we could, as some Great One, Who could, although we were unable to see Thee, hear us and help us. For as a boy I began to pray to Thee, my Help and my Refuge, and broke the fetters of my tongue to frame a prayer to Thee; and I used to ask Thee, though but a little boy yet with no little earnestness, that I might not be whipped at school. And when Thou didst not hear me, which was not "for no purpose,"[1] my stripes, at that time a great and heavy trouble to me, were made a subject of laughter by my elders, and even by my parents, who yet wished me no ill.

Is there any one who possesses such courage, and cleaves to Thee with such devotion?—is there, I say, any one (putting aside cases of mere stolidity) who entertains for Thee so great and vehement an attachment, as to disregard racks, hooks, and other tortures—from which the whole world in terror prays to be delivered—and to laugh at those who have the greatest dread of them, as our parents laughed at the tortures which we boys suffered at the hands of our masters? For we had as great a dread of our sufferings as they of theirs, and prayed as earnestly that we *might escape them*: and yet we incurred them, by not

[1] Ps. xxii. 2.

writing, reading, or minding our lessons so much as we were bidden. For memory and ability were not wanting to us, O Lord, for Thou didst graciously bestow them upon us according to our age; but we delighted in play; and were corrected for this by those who did the same. But the trifles with which older persons are occupied are called business, but when boys occupy themselves with that which in their case corresponds with those trifles, they are punished by those elders; and no one pities either boys or men. For will any one of sound judgment approve of my being beaten, because as a boy, through playing at ball, I made less progress in those studies which would only render me, when a man, capable of playing at a worse game; for what else was he doing who chastised me, who, when overthrown in some petty controversy by a fellow-tutor, was more tormented by chagrin and envy, than I was when beaten by my play-fellow in a game of ball?

CHAPTER X.

Through love of Play and of Performances, he is drawn away from Study.

AND yet I did sin, O Lord God, Disposer and Creator of all things natural, but only Disposer of sins: O Lord my God, I did wrong by acting contrary to the commands of my parents and of those masters. For I might have afterwards put to a good account that knowledge which, whatever their motive was, they wished me to acquire. For it was not from *the choice of* something better that I disobeyed them,

but through love of play; delighting in the pride of victories in contests; and to have my ears tickled with false fables, that they might itch the more; and the same curiosity made my eyes sparkle more and more at the sight of the plays and games of my elders. And although those who show them are held in such esteem that almost all would be glad for their children to do the same, yet are they willing that their children should be flogged, if by such games they are hindered from those studies, by the means of which they hope some time that they will become capable of the same performances.

Look mercifully on these things, O Lord; and deliver us, who now call upon Thee; deliver those, too, who have not yet called upon Thee, and grant that they may call upon Thee, and that Thou mayest deliver them.

CHAPTER XI.

Seized with Illness, he earnestly asked for Baptism, which his Mother, after careful deliberation, deferred.

FOR I had already heard, as a boy, of eternal life, promised to us through the humility of our Lord God, descending to our pride; and I was already signed with the sign of His cross, and salted with His salt,[1] even from the womb of my mother, who placed all her hope in Thee. Thou sawest, O Lord, when I was still but a boy, how one day I was suddenly seized

[1] One of the rites used in the admission of a Catechumen, *previous to Baptism,* "founded on the Lord's words, 'Have salt *in yourselves.*'"

in my stomach, became violently ill, and almost died —Thou sawest, my God (for Thou wert already my Keeper), with what earnestness and faith I begged of my loving mother and of Thy Church, which is the mother of us all, that I might receive the Baptism of Thy Christ my God and Lord. And the mother of my flesh, being much disturbed—since with a heart, pure in faith, she more lovingly travailed in birth of my eternal salvation—would with all speed have provided for my Baptism and cleansing by the sacraments of salvation, confessing Thee, O Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins, had I not suddenly recovered. Therefore my cleansing was put off, because should I live, I should inevitably get defiled again; and sin after Baptism is of a deeper dye, and fraught with greater danger to the soul than sin before it. I then already believed; and so did my mother, and all the household except my father; yet my mother's piety had a stronger influence over me than his unbelief, so that I believed in Christ, in spite of him. For it was her one longing that Thou, my God, shouldest be a father unto me, rather than he; and in this Thou didst help her to prevail over her husband, whom she obeyed, though she was better than he, as in thus fulfilling Thy command she also obeyed Thee.

I ask Thee, my God, I should like to know it if I may, why my Baptism was then put off? Was it for my good that the reins of sinning were, as it were, held loosely? or were they not held loosely? Or if not, why is it such a common saying on all sides, "Let him alone, let him do it, for he is not yet baptized"? And yet we do not say the same as to bodily health. "*Let him alone,* let him get worse, for he is not yet

cured." How much better, then, it would have been for me, had I been cured at once, and then by my own care, and that of my friends, the health of my soul, once restored, had been preserved safely in His keeping Who gave it? Better indeed! But how many and how great waves of temptation seem to hang over my childhood, my mother knew well; and she preferred that the clay of which I should be afterwards moulded, should be exposed to them, rather than endanger the image itself.

CHAPTER XII.

He was forced to go on with his Studies, which, however, God turned to his Profit.

IN my childhood, however,—a time of far less danger than that of youth,—I had no love for study, and hated to be forced to it; and yet I was forced to it, and it was well for me that I was, though I did not profit much, but had I not been forced, I should not have learned at all. But no one does anything well if he does it unwillingly, even though it be a good work in itself. Yet neither did they do well who urged me, but good came to me from Thee, my God. For they did not care to what account I turned what they pressed me to learn, save that it might satisfy the insatiable cravings of a wealthy poverty and an ignominious glory. But Thou, by Whom the hairs of our head are numbered,[1] didst make the error of all those who urged me to learn, to minister to my good; and my own error, in that I would not learn, Thou didst use for my punish-

[1] Matt. x. 30.

ment—a punishment which I, so small a boy and yet so great a sinner, justly deserved. So Thou didst make instruments of my good, those who did not do good themselves; and my own fault, rightly brought back punishment upon myself. For Thou hast ordered it, and so it comes to pass, that every inordinate affection should be to itself its own punishment.

CHAPTER XIII.

In what Studies he chiefly delighted.

BUT why I hated the Greek language, which I as a boy studied, I do not even now know. For I loved Latin, not what I was first taught, but what I learned from those who are styled grammarians. For those first lessons in reading, writing, and arithmetic, were as troublesome and irksome to me as all my Greek. But from what did this also arise, but from the sin and vanity of this life, because "I was flesh, and a breath that passeth away and cometh not again."[1] For those first lessons were better, indeed, because more certain; for by them I acquired, and still possess the ability to read whatever comes in my way, and to write whatever I wish; whereas afterwards I was forced to remember the wanderings of a certain Æneas, forgetful of my own, and to weep at the death of Dido, because she killed herself for love, whilst all the while I, wretched one, with dry eyes, endured myself dying amongst these things, far from Thee, O God, my Life.

For what could be more miserable than for me, a

[1] Ps. lxxviii. 39.

miserable being, to have no pity upon myself, and yet to be weeping on account of the death of Dido which came from her love for Æneas, whilst I had no tears to shed for that death which comes from not loving Thee, O God, Thou Light of my heart, Thou Bread of the mouth of my inmost spirit, Thou Husband of my mind and of my bosom thought? I did not love Thee, and I was not faithful to Thee, my Spouse, and at my unfaithfulness the world around me echoed, "Well done!" "well done!" "for the friendship of this world is fornication against Thee;" and the "welldone!" is repeated till one is ashamed not to be like the rest. And I did not weep at these things, but I wept for Dido "dead, and having by the sword sought a wound extreme,"[1] I myself all the while seeking extreme things, Thy lowest creatures, having forsaken Thee—earth turning towards earth. And if forbidden to read all this, I was grieved because I might not read what made me grieve. Such folly is accounted a more honourable and a richer kind of learning, than that by which I learned to read and write.

But now let my God cry aloud within my soul; and let Thy truth say to me: "It is not so, it is not so; far better were those first lessons." For, lo, I would rather forget the wanderings of Æneas and all the rest, than forget the way to read and write. But it is true that veils[2] hang over the thresholds of the grammar schools; yet these are less signs of an honourable secrecy than cloaks of error. Let not

[1] Æneid, vi. 457.

[2] Veils were hung up in courts of law as emblems of honour, *and perhaps, as here indicated, having the further significance of something hidden* and mysterious.

those of whom I no longer stand in fear cry out against me, whilst I confess to Thee, my God, whatever my soul desires, and whilst I find pleasure in condemning my own evil ways, that I may love Thy good ways. Let not the sellers and buyers of grammar cry out against me: for if I ask whether it is true, as the poet says, that Æneas at one time came to Carthage; the less learned of them will reply that they do not know, the more learned that he never did. But if I were to ask them with what letters the name "Æneas" is written, all who know their letters could make a true reply, according to the accepted use of those signs, upon which men have agreed amongst themselves. Therefore, if I were to ask, which of the two would prove the greater hindrance to the affairs of life, to forget the way to read and write, or to forget these poetic fictions, who, in his right senses, does not see what the reply must be? Therefore I erred as a boy when I preferred these follies to more profitable things, or rather when I loved the one and hated the other. Thus "one and one are two, two and two are four," was an odious sing-song to me; whilst the wooden horse filled with armed men, and the burning of Troy, and "the shade of Creusa herself,"[1] were to my vanity a most delightful spectacle.

CHAPTER XIV.

He hated Greek.

WHY then did I hate the Greek language, in which were similar stories. For Homer also skilfully

[1] Æneid, ii. 772.

wove fictions of the same kind, and with the most charming fancy, yet was he distasteful to me as a boy. And so I believe Virgil would be to the boys of Greece, if they were forced to learn him as I was Homer. For the difficulty, indeed, the difficulty of learning a foreign tongue gave, as it were, a flavour of gall to all the sweets of Grecian fable. For I knew none of the words,[1] and in order to make me know them I was forced on by cruel threats and penalties. Indeed there was a time when, as an infant, I knew no Latin, but by attention I learned it without menace or punishments, amid even the caresses of nurses, the jokes of those who had fun with me, and the merriment of those who played with me. This I learned without the goad of impending penalties, since my heart urged me to give birth to its own conceptions, which I could not do without learning some words, not of teachers, but of talkers, into whose ears I in turn brought forth what my mind conceived. Whence it is sufficiently clear, that the free desire of knowledge has more power to make us learn these things than the urgency of fear. But the latter restrains the rambles of the former by Thy laws, O God—by Thy laws, from the master's rod even to the martyrs' trials; Thy laws, which have the effect of intermingling a wholesome bitterness, and thereby recalling us to Thyself from that pernicious sweetness which draws us away from Thee.

[1] It must not be concluded from this that Augustine did not learn Greek. "He speaks of an early distaste which he had for the language, . . . plainly no more than a boy's distaste for the labour needful to overcome the first difficulties of a foreign tongue."

CHAPTER XV.

His Prayer to God.

HEAR, O Lord, my prayer, that my soul may not faint under Thy discipline; neither let me faint in confessing to Thee Thy Mercies, by which Thou hast drawn me out of all my most evil ways, that Thou mightest become sweeter to me than all the seductions which once I followed, and that I may love Thee with the strongest love, and may embrace Thy Hand with all the affection of my heart, and that Thou mayest deliver me from every temptation even unto the end. For behold, do Thou, O Lord, my King and my God, make use of for Thy service whatever in my childhood I learned; let it be for Thy service that I speak, and write, and read, and count: for when I learned vanities, Thou didst grant me Thy discipline, and the sins which I committed by taking delight in those vanities Thou hast forgiven me. In reading such things I learned many useful words; but these I might have learned from reading books which are not fictitious, and that is the safe course for the young to walk in.

CHAPTER XVI.

He inveighs against the Mode of educating the Young.

BUT woe to thee, thou torrent of human custom! Who shall stand against thee? How long will it be ere thou shalt be dried up? How long wilt thou *hurry away* the sons of Eve into that vast and ter-

rible ocean, which they with difficulty enough pass over who embark on the wood[1] of the Cross? For did I not read in thee of Jove the thunderer and adulterer? Both of these, certainly, he could not be; but so it was depicted, that by the flattery of false thunder he might authorise the imitation of true adultery. But who of these gowned masters would lend a serious ear to one of the same profession, crying out and saying, "Homer feigned these things, and transferred human actions to the gods; would I not rather that he had brought down divine things to us?"[2] But it would have been nearer the truth had he said, "He indeed feigned these things; but by attributing a divine nature to infamous men, crimes were no longer reckoned as crimes; so that those who committed them seemed to be imitating, not abandoned men, but the celestial gods."

And yet, thou torrent of hell, into thee the sons of men are hurled, with rewards for this learning; and a great affair is made of it, when this goes on publicly in the forum, in the sight of laws which allot salaries in addition to the stipend; and thou lashest thy rocks and roarest, "Here words are learned, here eloquence is acquired, most necessary for carrying your point and setting forth your opinions." And so should we not have known these words, "golden shower," "lap," "intrigue," "temples of heaven," and such other words which occur in the same passage; unless Terence had introduced a licentious youth,

[1] S. Augustine compares the Cross to a ship which is necessary if we would safely "pass the waves of this troublesome world," and reach our Country.

[2] *Cicero, Tuscul. i. c. 26.*

proposing to himself Jupiter as an example of debauchery, whilst he looks at a picture on the wall in which it was portrayed how, "they say, Jupiter once descended as a golden shower into Danae's lap, and thus imposed upon the woman." And see how he stirs up his bad passions, as if by celestial authority—"But what God?" says he; "was it not he who with his thunder shakes the highest temples of heaven; and may not I, poor man, do this? And so I did it, and that willingly."[1]

Now the words are not one bit more easily learned because of all this immorality; but the immorality is more unblushingly perpetrated because of the words. I do not blame the words themselves, which are choice and precious vessels; but the wine of error in them was given us to drink by those teachers, drunken themselves with the same, who forced it upon us, so that we were beaten if we did not drink it, neither had we any sober judge to whom we might appeal. And yet I, my God, in Whose sight I may now safely revive this remembrance, I willingly learned these things, and unhappily delighted in them, and on this account was called a hopeful boy.

CHAPTER XVII.

He continues his Attack upon the Mode of Training the Young in Literature.

SUFFER me, O my God, to say something about my talents, Thy gifts, and on what absurdities I wasted them. For a task was set me—troublesome

[1] *Terence* in Eunucho, act. iii. scen. 5.

enough to my mind, amid the hope of praise and the fear of blame or blows—that I should recite the words of Juno,[1] angry and remorseful, because she could not turn away the Trojan king from Italy; words which I had heard that she had never uttered; but we were forced to wander astray in the footsteps of these poetic figments, and to say in prose that which the poet had expressed in verse; and he received the greater meed of praise, who, maintaining the dignity of the character assumed, feigned in the most perfect manner the passions of anger and grief, and gave vent to them in appropriate language.

And what good was it to me, O my true Life, my God, that my recitation was applauded beyond so many of my own age and class? Was it not all smoke and wind? And was there nothing else upon which my talents and my tongue might have been exercised? Thy praises, O Lord, Thy praises, in Thy Scriptures might have been the support of the tendrils of my heart, and thus it would not have trailed amongst these empty follies, and become a vile prey of the fowls of the air. For there are more ways than one of sacrificing to the rebel angels.

CHAPTER XVIII.

That Men are more concerned in observing the Rules of Grammar than the Law of God.

BUT what wonder that I was thus borne away into these vanities, and that I went out from Thy *presence, my* God, when men were proposed for my

[1] Æneid, i. 36-75.

imitation, who, if in relating some action of theirs, not bad, they were guilty of some incorrect or ungrammatical expression, were filled with shame when censured for it; but when they described their own immoral conduct, in proper, rich, and elegant words and sentences, they gloried in the praises they received? Thou seest these things, O Lord, and holdest Thy peace, for Thou art "long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth."[1] Wilt Thou for ever hold Thy peace? And now Thou dost rescue from this most dreadful gulf the soul that seeks Thee, and thirsts for Thy delights, and whose "heart saith to Thee, I have sought Thy Face;" "Thy Face, Lord, will I seek."[2] For I was far from Thy Face by darkened affections. Indeed we do not leave Thee and return to Thee with our feet or by change of place. Nor did that son, Thy younger one, procure horses, or carriages, or ships, or fly with visible wings, or make his journey upon his legs, that in a far country he might waste in riotous living what Thou gavest him when he set out. Thou wast a loving Father for giving it to him, and more loving still to him when he returned empty. It is by sensual, for that is, by darkened affections, we leave Thee, and that is the country which is far from Thy Face.

Behold, O Lord God, and behold with Thy accustomed Patience, how diligently the sons of men observe the laws of letters and syllables which have been received from former speakers, and the eternal covenant of everlasting salvation, delivered by Thee, they neglect; so that he who holds or teaches the old laws of pronunciation, if he should, contrary

[1] *Ps.* lxxxvi. 15. [2] Ps. xxvii. 8.

to the rules of grammar, drop an "h," would more offend men; than if he, a man himself, hated a man,[1] contrary to Thy precepts. As if the hatred he bears to any one, were not a more injurious enemy to himself, than the one he hates; or, as if another who persecuted him could do him more harm, than he does to his own heart by bearing malice. And certainly no science of letters is so deeply imprinted within us as that law of conscience—"not to do to another what we would not have done to ourselves." How hidden art Thou, "dwelling on high,"[2] O God, alone Great, Who by an unwearied law spreadest penal blindness upon lawless desires! When a man is desirous of being accounted eloquent, standing before a human judge, and in the presence of a crowd of men, inveighing against his enemy with the fiercest hatred, he will be most cautious, lest by a slip of the tongue he should make a grammatical error; but he will take no care, lest through his furious spirit he should take away a man's life.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of childish Faults which pass on to mature Years.

THIS was the moral atmosphere into which I, wretched boy, was first introduced, and this was the stage, where I feared rather to fall into a grammatical error than, having done so, to envy those who had kept clear of it. I say these things and confess

[1] There is a play on the Latin word 'homo' (man) in the *original.*

[2] *Isa. xxxiii. 5.*

them to Thee, my God; things which formerly brought me praise, from those whom I then thought it a virtue to please. For I did not see the abyss of foulness, into which "I was cast away from Thine Eyes."[1] For in Thy sight what could be more vile than I myself already was, when I was offensive even to such as were like me, deceiving my tutors, masters, and parents with numberless lies, through my love of play, eagerness for sight-seeing, and restless desire to imitate such fooleries? Then I committed thefts from the cellar and table of my parents, either for the sake of gratifying my appetite, or that I might have to give to other boys, who sold their play to me, in which they took the same delight as I did. In this play, too, I often cheated—myself conquered by the vain desire to excel. But the very thing I could so little tolerate, or when I caught any one in it, was so fierce in denouncing, was I not myself doing to others? and when detected in it, if upbraided, I chose rather to fall into a passion than to yield. Is this your childish innocence? No, no, O Lord; I pray to Thee, my God, for mercy. For these sinful ways continue, when we grow older, though related to different objects; and tutors, masters, nuts, balls, and sparrows are replaced by magistrates, rulers, gold, estates, and possessions; just as the rod is followed by severer forms of chastisement. Therefore it must have been because of their littleness, that Thou, our King, didst commend children, as emblems of humility, when Thou didst say, "of such is the kingdom of heaven."[2]

[1] Ps. xxxi. 22. [2] Matt. xix. 14.

CHAPTER XX.

For the Blessings conferred upon him in Childhood, he gives Thanks to God.

BUT yet, O Lord, to Thee—most excellent and good Creator and Ruler of the universe—our God, thanks were due, even if Thou hast willed that I should not survive the age of childhood. For even then I existed, I lived, and I felt; I had intrusted to me a completeness of being—a trace of that most secret Unity whence I was derived; I guarded the integrity of all my senses by an inward sense, and in little ways, and in my thoughts about little things, I began to delight in truth. I disliked to be deceived, I had a strong memory, I had facility of speech, I found a comfort in friendship, I shrunk from pain, reproach, and ignorance. What was not wonderful, and a ground for praise, in that little life? But these are all the gifts of my God; I did not give them to myself; and they are good, and all these are myself. Good, then, is He Who made me, and He Himself is my good; and before Him do I rejoice for all those goods which were mine when I was a boy. For this was my sin, that not in Him, but in His creatures—in myself and other creatures, I sought for pleasures, honours, and realities; and so rushed headlong into trouble, shame, and error. Thanks be to Thee, my Sweetness, my Glory, and my Confidence, my God: thanks be to Thee for Thy gifts; but do Thou preserve them to me. For in so doing, Thou wilt preserve me; and Thy gifts shall be increased and perfected, and I shall be with Thee myself, for my very being is Thy gift.

BOOK II.

He passes to another age, that which commenced at sixteen, when having given up study in his father's house, he indulged his own will and desires; he remembers this time with deep remorse, and marvels at the way he was betrayed into committing a theft, and yet the human heart is not led into evil, unless in some way evil presents itself under the form of good.

CHAPTER I.

He reflects upon his Condition and the Vices of his Youth.

I WISH now to recall the foulness of my past life, and the carnal corruptions of my soul: not for love of them, but for love of Thee, my God. Through love of Thy Love I do this, reviewing my most wicked ways in the bitterness of my remembrance, that Thou mayest become sweet to me—a sweetness not deceptive but blessed and abiding, gathering me from that dissipation in which I was torn to pieces, when turned away from Thee as from the only One, I lost myself in many directions. I burned in my youth to be satisfied with things below, and I dared to run wild with manifold and shadowy loves; and "my beauty consumed away," and I became loathsome in Thine Eyes; pleasing myself, and desiring to please in the eyes of man.

CHAPTER II.

In his Sixteenth Year, he was consumed with Sensual Passions.

AND what was it that delighted me, but to love and to be loved? But the intercourse of mind with mind was not restricted within the clear bounds of honest love; but dense vapours arose from the miry lusts of the flesh, and the bubblings of youth, and clouded and darkened my heart; so that the clearness of true love could not be discerned from the thick mist of sensuality. Both boiled together confusedly within me, and carried away my weak young life over the precipices of passion, and merged me in a whirlpool of disgrace. Thy wrath was thickening over me, and I knew it not. I was deafened by the clanking of the chain of my mortality, the punishment of the pride of my soul; and I was going further and further from Thee, and Thou didst let me alone, and I was tossed about and poured out, and I flowed away and boiled over through my fornications, and Thou didst hold Thy peace, O Thou—at last my Joy! Thou then didst hold Thy peace, and I went still further from Thee into more and more fruitless sources of sorrow, with a proud dejection, and a restless weariness.

O that some one had set bounds to my disorder, and turned to account the fleeting charms of these novelties and limited their seductive power, that the waves of youthful passion might have broken themselves, if they could not be calmed, upon the shore of

marriage, and have been content with the end, the procreation of children, which Thy law ordains, O Lord; Thou Who thus perpetuatest our mortal race, being able with a gentle hand to blunt the sharpness of the thorns which found no place in Thy paradise? For Thy Omnipotence is not far from us, even when we are far from Thee; or certainly I ought to have more carefully heeded the voice from Thy clouds—"Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh, but I spare you;"[1] and, "it is good for a man not to touch a woman;"[2] and "he that is unmarried thinketh of the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord; but he that is married careth for the things of the world, how he may please his wife."[3] Therefore to these words I should have listened more attentively, and so, having become "an eunuch for the kingdom of heaven's sake,"[4] I should have more happily awaited Thy embraces.

But I, wretch as I was, became like a boiling sea, following the tide of my own violent impulses, having forsaken Thee; and I exceeded all bounds, yet I did not escape Thy scourges: for what mortal can? For Thou wast never wanting in Thy merciful anger, and didst sprinkle all my unlawful pleasures with the bitterest misfortunes, that so I might be led to seek pleasures which were unalloyed. But such I could not find, save in Thee, O Lord, save in Thee, "Who teachest by trouble as by a precept,"[5] and woundest that Thou mayest make whole, and killest lest we die from Thee. Where was I, and how far was I exiled from the delights of Thy house, in that sixteenth year

[1] 1 Cor. vii. 28. [2] 1 Cor. vii. 1. [3] 1 Cor. vii. 32, 33.
[4] *Matt. xix. 12.* [5] Ps. xciv. 20. Deut. xxxii. 39.

of my life, when a raging passion, allowed indeed by the shameful habits of men, but disallowed by Thy laws, held me in its grasp, and I gave myself entirely up to it? My friends, meanwhile, took no care to hinder my ruin by lawful wedlock; but they only took care that I should learn to make an excellent speech, and become a persuasive orator.

CHAPTER III.

Concerning his Journey, taken for the sake of his Education, and the purpose of his Parents.

NOW for that year my studies were given over; and in the meantime, after my return from Madaura (a neighbouring city to which I had begun to go for the purpose of learning grammar and rhetoric), the expenses of a longer journey to Carthage were being provided for me, by the energy rather than by the affluence of my father, for he was but a poor freeman in Thagaste. To whom am I relating these things? not indeed to Thee, O God, but before Thee I am relating them to my own kind, to humankind, or rather to that small part of it which may light upon these my writings. And for what end do I write this? that I myself and whoever reads it may consider "from what a depth we must cry unto Thee."[1] For what is nearer to Thy Ears than a confessing heart, and a life of faith? And who did not extol my father for thus, beyond his means, providing for his son what was necessary for so long a journey for the sake of his *education?* For there were many wealthy citizens

[1] Ps. cxxx. 1.

who did not do so much for their children: yet this same father had no concern for my spiritual progress, nor for the purity of my life, so long as I became a cultivated speaker—however barren of Thy culture, O God, Who art the only true and good Lord of the ground of my heart.

But when in my sixteenth year I began to be at home, and had for a time an entire holiday—an interruption in my studies necessitated by my parents narrow means—the briers of lust grew rankly, and there was no hand to root them out. Nay, indeed, for my father, when he saw me at the baths, and knew that I was ripening into manhood, and invested with youthful energies, made gestures of joy, hoping that his name would be handed down to posterity, and with delight conversed thereupon with my mother; intoxicated with that joy, wherein the world forgets Thee, its Creator, and loves Thy creature instead of Thee—an intoxication brought about by the invisible wine of its perverse and grovelling inclinations. But in my mother's breast Thou hadst already begun Thy temple, and the foundation of Thy holy habitation: whereas my father was only a catechumen, and that but recently. Therefore she started with a pious fear and trembling; and although I was not yet baptized, feared lest I should fall into those crooked ways in which they walk who "turn their back to Thee, and not their face."[1]

Ah me! and dare I say, my God, that Thou didst hold Thy peace when I was wandering further and further from Thee! Is it so that Thou wert altogether silent? And whose then were those words

[1] Jer. ii. 27.

but Thine, which through my mother, Thy faithful one, Thou didst sing in my ears? none of them sank down into my heart then, that they might have effect. For she desired me, and I remember in private with what earnestness she warned me to keep myself from fornication, and even still more from adultery. I took it all as mere womanish advice, which I should be ashamed to obey. But it was Thine, and I knew it not; and I thought that Thou wert silent, and that she alone spoke to me—she, who was but Thy mouthpiece, in whom, when she was despised by her son, Thou wert despised by "the son of Thy handmaid, Thy servant."[1] But I did not realise it; and I rushed headlong with such blindness, that amongst my equals I was ashamed to be behindhand in wickedness, when I heard them boasting of their shameful actions, and glorying in them so much the more the viler they were, and I was disposed to do the same, not only for the pleasure of the deed but also for the sake of their praise. What is worthy of blame but vice? But I made myself out more vicious, that I might not be blamed; and when I had it not in my power to equal these abandoned ones, I feigned that I had done what I had not done, lest I should seem less honourable from being more innocent, and be accounted of less importance because I was more chaste.

Behold with what companions I used to pace the streets of Babylon, and I wallowed in the mire thereof, as if amid spices and precious ointments. And in the very midst of it, that I might cleave to it the tighter, the invisible enemy trod me down and *seduced me, for* I was ready for seduction. For

[1] Ps. cxvi. 16.

neither did she, the mother of my flesh—who had already "fled from the midst of Babylon"[1] but tarried on its outskirts—as she warned me against immorality, so heed what her husband had told her concerning me, as to restrain within the boundaries of conjugal affection (if it could not be cut to the quick) what she felt was already most hateful and would become afterwards most dangerous. She did not recommend this course, for she was afraid lest a wife should turn out to be an obstacle and a clog to my hopes; not that hope of a future life which my mother had in Thee, but the hope of my advancement in learning, upon which both my parents were too intent: my father, because he thought hardly at all of Thee, and of me only in a vain way; my mother, however, because she, far from regarding the usual line of study as a hindrance to obtaining Thee, imagined it to be a help. For so I conjecture, recalling, as well as I can, what I knew of my parents. The reins, then, were loosened to such a degree, beyond the measure of due severity, that I might play, and gratify myself in various ways without restraint, from all of which, indeed, arose a mist hiding from me, O my God, the calm brightness of Thy Truth; and "my iniquity stood out, as it were, from fatness."[2]

CHAPTER IV.

He commits a Theft in company with his Companions.

THY law certainly condemns theft, O Lord, the law too written in the hearts of men, which

[1] *Jer.* li. 6. [2] Ps. lxxiii. 7.

not even iniquity itself can efface. For what thief can endure another thief? not even a rich thief another who is brought to steal through want. Yet I resolved to commit a theft, and I committed it, compelled neither by want nor poverty, but through a loathing of honesty and a lust for iniquity. For I stole that of which I had already plenty, and much better: neither did I want to enjoy what I longed to steal, but to joy in the act of thieving and the sin. There was a pear-tree near our vineyard, laden with fruit, tempting neither for colour nor sweetness. To shake and rob this tree, we bad young fellows went, late one night, after we had been racketing according to our abominable habit in the streets till then; and we carried off great loads, not for a feast, for, having only just bitten them, we flung them to the pigs, and the only pleasure we had in this was that we were doing what we ought not. Behold my heart, O God, behold my heart, upon which Thou hadst mercy when in the depths of this bottomless pit. Now, behold let my heart tell Thee, what it then sought, that I should be wantonly wicked, when there was no attraction in the sin but the evil of it. It was foul, and I loved it; I loved to perish: I loved to be faulty, simply for the sake of being at fault, and not for any further cause. O base soul, leaping down from thy firmament into utter ruin; not seeking ought in disgraceful actions but the disgrace itself!

CHAPTER V.

That no one sins without a Motive.

BUT there is a tempting appearance in beautiful bodies, in gold and silver, and the rest; and there are things which are very agreeable to our bodily touch. The other senses have in like manner objects which are adapted to their delight; also worldly honour, and the power of governing and overcoming have their attractions, whence also arises the thirst for revenge: and yet to obtain all these, we must not depart from Thee, O Lord, nor break Thy law. And life itself has its own charm, through a certain intrinsic comeliness, and a correspondence with all that is fair here below. Human friendship in like manner is delightful, as it knits together with a sweet tie many minds. On account of all these things, and of others like them, sin is committed, when by some inordinate inclination towards goods of the lowest kind those which are better and highest are forsaken—Thyself, O Lord our God, and Thy Truth, and Thy Law. For these lowest things have some sort of gratification, but not like my God, Who made all things; for "in Him doth the righteous delight, and He is the joy of the upright in heart."[1]

When, then, we ask for what reason a crime was committed, it is not generally believed to have been committed at all, unless there appears to have been some desire of gaining goods of the lowest kind or a fear of losing them. For they are in themselves fair

[1] Ps. lxiv. 10.

and beautiful, although in comparison with those higher and beatific joys they are mean and low. A man commits a murder; why has he done it? he was in love with the man's wife or his possessions; or he sought to rob for his own livelihood; or he feared that he would incur some loss at the other's hands; or he burned to have his revenge for a wrong which he had suffered. Would a murder be committed without a cause, simply for the delight of murdering? who would believe such a thing? For, as for that heartless and cruel man, of whom it is said, that he was gratuitously wicked and cruel, there is, after all, a cause assigned; "lest," says he, "through idleness my hand or mind should lose its powers."[1] But wherefore this? why so? why, in order that, by becoming an adept in wicked deeds, having taken the city, he might gain honours, power, and riches, and be freed from fear of the laws, and from his domestic embarrassments from want of means, and from the consciousness of his crimes. Neither then did Cataline himself love his crimes, but something else, for the sake of which he committed them.

CHAPTER VI.

All things, which under the semblance of good invite to Vices, in God alone are to be found true and perfect.

WHAT then was it which I, poor wretch, loved in thee, O theft of mine, O wicked deed of mine, that night, in my sixteenth year? Thou wert not beautiful because thou wert a theft; or art thou

[1] SALLUST. *de Bell. Catil.* c. 9.

anything at all, that thus I should address thee? Beautiful were those pears which we stole, for they were made by Thee, Thou most beautiful of all, Creator of all, Thou good God, God, my sovereign good and my true good. Those pears were beautiful, but it was not for them my wretched soul craved; I had plenty of better, but those I took only for the sake of stealing. For having gathered them, I threw them away, feasting only on the lusciousness of the sin, which I enjoyed. For if I did taste some of them, it was the sin which gave them a sweet flavour. And now, O Lord my God, I ask what it was in that theft which delighted me, for, behold, I can find no beauty in it; I mean not such beauty as is found in justice and prudence, neither such as is in the mind and memory, in the senses and animal life of man; nor yet as the stars and the bright orbs of heaven are glorious; nor such as is in earth and sea, teeming with that nascent life, which by its birth replaces all decay; nor even that imperfect and shadowy beauty which deceptive vices seem to possess.

For thus pride apes highness; whereas Thou alone art our all, the high God. And ambition, what does it seek but honours and glory; whereas Thou alone art to be honoured above all, and to be glorified for evermore. And the cruelty of those in power seeks to be feared; but who is to be feared save God alone, and from His Hands what power can be snatched or withdrawn?—when, or where? how, or by whom? And the fondlings of the licentious would fain be taken for love, but nothing is so tender as Thy Love, nor is anything loved more healthfully than Thy Truth, which is beautiful and luminous above all. And curiosity affects to

be a desire for knowledge; whereas Thou hast supreme knowledge of all. Ignorance also and foolishness pass under the cloak of simplicity and harmlessness, because nothing can be found more simple than Thy own Being; and what can be more harmless than Thyself, since they are his own deeds which injure the sinner? And sloth, as it were, seeks to be at rest; but what sure rest is there except in the Lord? Luxury would fain be styled fulness and abundance; but Thou art the Fulness and the unfailing Abundance of sweetness incorruptible. Prodigality hides itself under the cover of liberality; but Thou art the most plenteous Giver of all good things. Covetousness desires to possess much; and Thou possessest all things. Envy quarrels about excellency; and Thou—what is so excellent as Thyself? Anger seeks revenge; and who takes vengeance more justly than Thyself? Fear shudders at unusual and sudden accidents which endanger objects beloved, and uses precaution for safety's sake; but what can be unwonted, what can be sudden to Thee? or who can separate[1] from Thee, the object Thou lovest? or where can be lasting safety but with Thee? Sadness pines away at the loss of things, in the possession of which we found delight; because we would not have anything taken away from us, as nothing can be taken away from Thee.

Thus is the soul like an unfaithful spouse, when it turns away from Thee, and seeks apart from Thee what she cannot find pure and unadulterated, till she comes back to Thee. All perversely imitate Thee who go far from Thee, and lift themselves up against Thee; yet even in such an imitation as that they show

[1] Rom. viii. 9.

that Thou art the Creator of all nature, and that there is consequently no place where they can entirely withdraw themselves from Thee.

What was it, then, in that theft I loved? and how did I then wickedly and perversely imitate my Lord? Did it please me to act at least by stealth against Thy laws, since I could not by sovereignty; so that I, a captive, might ape a lame liberty, by escaping the punishment though not the guilt of what I did—a dark image of Thy Omnipotency? Behold, here is Thy servant, fleeing from his Lord, and following a shadow. O corruption, O monster of life, and depth of death! Is it possible that I liked to do what I might not, simply and for no other reason than because I might not.

CHAPTER VII.

He gives Thanks to God for the Forgiveness of his Sins, and because he had been kept from many.

"WHAT shall I render unto the Lord"[1] for permitting my soul to recall these things, and yet to feel no terror about them? "I will love Thee, O Lord, and give Thee thanks and confess unto Thy Name," because Thou hast forgiven me my wicked and disgraceful deeds. I ascribe it to Thy Grace and to Thy Mercy, that Thou hast dissolved my sins like the ice. It is owing to Thy Grace, too, that I have not committed more sins; for what was I not ready to do, who even loved a base action for its own sake? And I confess that all has been forgiven me; whatever sins I have done by my own will, as well as those which but for

[1] Ps. cxvi. 12.

alone; I should never have done it alone. Behold before Thee, O my God, is this vivid remembrance of my soul; that I should not have committed this theft if alone, in which I found no pleasure from the thing stolen, but only from the stealing; and the stealing would have been no pleasure to me, if I had been by myself, neither should I have done it. O friendship, beyond measure enmity! O incomprehensible seduction of the mind! O avidity for doing mischief out of mere sport and wantonness—thou desire for another's loss, without gain to thyself, without lust of revenge! but when they say, "Let us go and do it," and we are ashamed not to be shameless.

CHAPTER X.

In God is all Good.

WHO can untie this twisted and tangled skein? It is loathsome; I will look at it no longer, I hate the sight of it. Thee I long for, O Justice and Innocence, fair and graceful to chaste eyes, ever satisfying and yet ever desired. There is rest with Thee, true rest, and life unruffled. He that enters into Thee, "enters into the joy of his Lord;"[1] and shall know no fear of evil, and shall find all good in Thee the Highest Good. I fell away from Thee, and wandered, O my God, far astray from Thee, my Strength, in my youth, and I became to myself like a barren land.

[1] S. Matt. xxv. 21.

BOOK III.

Of the time he resided at Carthage, that is, from his seventeenth to his nineteenth year, where though he stayed for the sake of study, he freely gave himself up to plays and infamous practices. Through Cicero's "Hortensius" he is inflamed with the love of wisdom; which he sought proudly, and so fell into the heresy of the Manichæans. Their errors and follies he in passing attacks, and clearly discusses questions concerning vicious excesses and true justice. Monica, weeping profusely and continually for her son, is assured of his future repentance by a dream which God sent her, and by the answer of a holy bishop.

CHAPTER I.

By the Love which he hunted after, he is taken.

I CAME to Carthage, into the very midst of a seething mass of immorality. I was not yet in love, but I longed to be so, and from a deeper want, I hated myself for wanting not. In my desire to love, I sought an object to love, and hated safety and the path which had no traps in it. For there was an inward famine of that inward food, Thyself, my God, and that famine did not assert its presence by hunger, for I had no desire for incorruptible nourishment; not because I was full, but because the more empty I was the greater was my distaste for it. Thus my soul became unhealthy; and full of ulcers, cast itself forth in its misery, eager to be scraped by contact with objects of

sense—with souls I mean, for otherwise they would certainly not call forth love. For to love, and to be loved, was sweet to me; and the more so when I enjoyed the bodily presence of the one loved. Therefore I polluted the course of friendship with sordid desires, and dimmed its brightness with hellish passion; and foul and dishonourable as I was, yet I, in an excess of vanity, affected a polite and refined manner. I rushed then into the love by which I longed to be held captive. O my God, my Mercy, with what gall didst Thou in Thy Goodness sprinkle that sweetness! For I was both loved, and in secret admitted to the bond of enjoyment; and I in my joy was bound about with chains of sorrow, so that I might be scourged with the red-hot iron rods of jealousies, suspicions, fears, angers, and quarrels.

CHAPTER II.

He loved to see Tragedies.

THE plays at the theatre carried me away, filled, as they were, with representations of my miseries, and added fuel to the fire. Why is it, that man likes thus to taste an unnecessary sorrow, by beholding distressing and tragical events which he would not wish to happen to himself? And yet as a spectator he wills to be touched with sorrow for them, and this sorrow is his pleasure. What is this but a miserable madness? For the more he is affected by such sights the less free is he from the like affections. Although, when he suffers in his own person, they call

it misery; when he is grieved at the sufferings of others, they are wont to name it pity. But what pity can there be expended upon the dramatic performances of the stage? The spectator is not appealed to in order that he might bring succour to the distressed, but he is invited only to grieve; and the more the actor of these representations excites his grief, the more he applauds him. And if these human calamities, whether historic or fabulous, are so acted as to fail to excite the emotions of the beholder, he goes away in disgust, and finds fault with the performance; but if he is touched with grief, he remains intent, and finds delight in weeping.

Do we then love sorrow? surely every one desires joy. Or is it that whilst no one likes to be miserable, yet we like to feel pity, and as pity cannot arise without some sorrow, on this account alone sorrows are loved? This springs also from that vein of friendship. But whither does it go? whither does it flow? why does it run down into that torrent of pitch which bubbles forth its frightful tides of filthy passions, into which itself is changed and perverted, being by its own consent turned aside and precipitated from its heavenly clearness? Shall pity then be condemned? By no means. Sometimes, indeed, such feelings may be loved. But beware of impurity, O my soul, under the defence of my God—the "God of our fathers, Who is to be praised and exalted above all for ever;"[1] beware of impurity. For I am not now without compassion; but then in theatres I used to rejoice with lovers when they enjoyed each other's company, although it was only an imaginary transaction as a

[1] Dan. iii. 52, V.

part of the play; and when they lost one another, as if pitiful, I was grieved for them, and yet I found delight in both. But now I have much more pity for him who rejoices in wickedness, than for him who is thought to undergo a hardship, when he loves a pernicious pleasure or is deprived of some wretched delight. This certainly is a truer compassion, but it is a grief without delight. For although he that has pity on the miserable, is to be commended for his charitable service; yet would he who has genuine compassion, assuredly prefer that the cause of his sorrow did not exist. For if there is such a thing (which cannot be) as an ill-disposed goodwill, then he who truly and sincerely feels pity, can wish that there might be some miserable persons, so that he might compassionate them. Some sorrows, then, may be commended; none, loved. For Thou, O Lord God, Who lovest souls, hast a pity far more pure and incorruptible than ours, and art never wounded by sorrow. "And who is sufficient for these things?"[1]

But I then, poor wretch, used to love to grieve, and went in quest of something to grieve at; when in another's affliction, and that, too, feigned and pretended, the action of the player which best pleased me, and exercised upon me the strongest fascination, was that which drew tears from my eyes. Is it any wonder that I, an unhappy sheep, straying from Thy flock, and impatient of Thy protection, should be defiled with a foul disease? And hence came this love of griefs—not of griefs which entered deeply into my soul: for I did not love to suffer myself the very things which *I loved to* behold in the play, but just the hearing and

[1] 2 Cor. ii. 16.

the feigning, such as only scratched, as it were, the surface; upon which, however, as from scratches of the nails, followed a hot swelling, a gathering, and a festering sore. Such was my life, could it be called life, O my God!

CHAPTER III.

In the School of Rhetoric, he abhors the Deeds of the "Subverters."

AND Thy faithful Mercy hovered over me afar. Upon what great iniquities did I consume away, and I yielded to a sacrilegious curiosity, which brought me, having forsaken Thee, to treacherous depths, and to the beguiling service of devils, to whom I sacrificed my wicked actions, and in all this Thou didst scourge me! I dared even in the celebration of Thy solemn Service, within the walls of the church, to indulge evil desires, and there to make designs which would bring the fruits of death, for which Thou didst scourge me with heavy punishments; but not one-half that I deserved, O Thou, my exceeding great Mercy, my God, my Refuge from those terrible destroyers amongst whom I wandered with a stiff neck, withdrawing further from Thee, loving my own ways and not Thine, loving a fleeting liberty.

Those studies also which were accounted honourable, had their attraction in reference to the Courts of Law, that I might excel in them, and be so much the more honoured the more I could deceive. So great is the blindness of men, glorying even in their blindness. And now I was head in the rhetoric school, at which I proudly rejoiced, and was puffed up with

self-conceit; though far more sedate, O Lord, Thou knowest, and removed by a large interval from the ways of those whom they call "Subverters" (for this ill-sounding and diabolical name was, as it were, the badge of city manners), amongst whom I lived, with a shameless shame that I was not like them: and with them I was; and I was sometimes delighted with their society, but always abhorred their deeds, that is, their overturnings, when they wantonly ridiculed the modesty of strangers, which they shocked, gratuitously making game of them, and thereby feeding their ill-willed mirth. No act can be more like the actions of devils. What name, therefore, could be more appropriate to them than that of "Subverters"? being themselves first overturned and perverted; the deceitful spirits secretly deriding and seducing them, by the very act by which they love to laugh at and impose on others.

CHAPTER IV.

The "Hortensius" of Cicero stimulated him with a Love for Philosophy.

AMONGST such companions as these, I, in that tender age, used to learn books of eloquence, in which I desired to excel, out of the culpable and vain motive—the delight of human vanity; and in the ordinary course of study I arrived at a certain book of one Cicero, whose tongue almost all admire, not so his heart. But this book contained an exhortation of his to philosophy, and is called "Hortensius." This book, indeed, wrought a change in my affections, and turned my prayers to Thyself, O Lord, and altered my pur-

poses and desires. All my vain hopes suddenly appeared contemptible to me, and I longed with an incredibly ardent desire for the immortality of wisdom, and began to arise that I might return to Thee. For it was not now to improve my powers of speaking, upon which I, then nineteen years of age, seemed to be spending my mother's gains, for my father had been dead two years—not to improve my powers of speaking that I read that book; neither was it the style which convinced me, but the matter.

How did I burn, my God, how did I burn to fly back from earthly things to Thee, and I did not know what Thou wouldest do with me! For wisdom is with Thee. But the love of wisdom is in Greek called "Philosophy," and with a desire for this that book inflamed me. Some there are who play falsely with this term, and under colour of a great, pleasing, and honourable name, pass off their own errors: and almost all who in these or former times have acted in this way, are mentioned and described in that book; and there is set forth that wholesome warning of Thy Spirit, by Thy good and pious servant—"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."[1] And I at that time—Thou knowest, O Light of my heart, that these words of the Apostle were then unknown to me—I was delighted with that exhortation, solely because I was thereby stirred, inflamed, and filled with desire not for this or that sect, but to love, seek, gain, lay hold of, and embrace wisdom itself, whatever that might be;

[1] Col. ii. 8, 9.

and to the great ardour which this book kindled, there was only one drawback, that the Name of Christ was not there. For this Name, according to Thy Mercy, O Lord, this Name of my Saviour Thy Son, my tender heart drank in even with my mother's milk, and treasured up; and no book—be it ever so learned, polished, or authentic—could wholly take possession of me, where that Name was not found.

CHAPTER V.

He turns against the Holy Scriptures, on account of their Simplicity of Style.

I DETERMINED then to turn my attention to the Holy Scriptures, that I might see what they were. And lo, I discovered them to be a thing not to be understood by the proud, nor laid bare to children; but lowly at the entrance, sublime as you advance, and veiled with mysteries; and I was not such a one as could enter into it, or bend my neck to its paths. For not as I now speak did I feel, when I then turned to the Scriptures; but they seemed to me unworthy to be compared with Tully in point of dignity. For my swelling pride disliked the style, and my acuteness of perception could not penetrate their inner meaning. Yet with little children these Scriptures would unfold themselves; but I disdained to be a little one, and, inflated with pride, I seemed to myself to be great.

CHAPTER VI.

By the Manichaeans, how he was ensnared.

THEREFORE I fell among men in a phrensy of pride, exceedingly carnal, and great talkers, in whose mouth were the snares of the devil, and a bird-lime made up of a mixture of the syllables of Thy Name, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Paraclete, our Comforter, the Holy Spirit. These names were ever in their mouth, but only as a sound and noise of the tongue; and, as for the rest, their heart was void of the truth. And they said, "The Truth, the Truth," and spoke much of it to me, yet "the truth was not in them;"[1] but they spake what was false, not of Thee only, Who art the Truth itself; but even of those elements of this world which are Thy creatures, concerning which philosophers have spoken true things, and yet I ought to have passed by even them, for the love of Thee, my Father, my highest Good, Beauty of all that is beautiful. O Truth, Truth, how deeply did my inmost being pant after Thee, when they in many ways, and often, and in many large volumes, spake of Thee to me, though it was but a sound. And these were the dishes in which, to me hungering after Thee, they served up instead of Thee, Thy sun and moon, and other beautiful works; but yet Thy works, not Thyself, nor even Thy first works. For Thy first works were spiritual, not corporeal, however bright and celestial these latter may be. But not even for these Thy first creatures did I hunger and thirst, but for

[1] 1 John ii. 4.

Thee Thyself, the Truth, "in Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning:"[1] and they still set before me in those dishes splendid phantasms, but it was better to love this very sun than these, for the sun is at least a real object to our sight, but the phantasms through the eyes practise an illusion upon the mind. Yet because I thought them Thee, I fed upon them; not with appetite indeed, because in them I did not taste Thee as Thou art; for those empty figments were not Thyself, neither was I nourished by them, but rather exhausted. Food in dreams seems very like food when we are awake, yet those asleep are not nourished by it, for they are asleep. But those phantasms did not bear the least resemblance to Thee, as Thou hast now shown Thyself to me, for they were corporeal phantasms, false bodies, in comparison with which those real bodies which we behold with our fleshly sight, whether heavenly or earthly, are far more certain —objects which the beasts and birds see as well as we, and which are more certain than when they are only imagined. And again, we can with more certainty imagine them, than from them raise our thoughts up to other bodies vast and infinite, which indeed do not exist; by such empty things was I then fed, and not fed. But Thou, my Love, for Whom I faint that I may be strong, art not those bodies which we see, although in heaven; nor those which are there, and are beyond our gaze; for Thou hast made them, neither dost Thou reckon them amongst Thy chiefest works. How far then art Thou from those phantasms of mine, phantasms of bodies which have no existence whatever, and in *comparison* with which the images of bodies which

[1] James i. 17.

have a real existence are more certain; and still further, the bodies themselves which really exist are more certain than the images of them, which bodies Thou art not; nor art Thou the soul, which is the life of the bodies; and better indeed and more certain is the life of the bodies than the bodies! But Thou art the Life of souls, the Life of lives, the Life self-derived and unchangeable, the Life of my soul.

But where wert Thou then, and how far from me? And I—gone indeed into a far country, away from Thee, debarred even from feeding on the husks of the swine,[1] whom with husks I fed. For how much better were the fables of the grammarians and poets, than these deceptions! For verses and poems and "Medea's Flight" were certainly more useful, than their fair elements, variously dyed, corresponding to the fair caverns of darkness,[2] which have no existence at all, and destroy him who believes in them. For a verse or a song I can turn into real meat. But of "Medea's Flight," although I sang, I did not appropriate the story; though I heard it sung, I did not give it credit: but those things I did believe.

Alas! alas! by what steps was I brought down to "the depths of hell"![3] Toiling indeed and restless through lack of the Truth, when for Thee, my God, I sought (for to Thee I now confess it, Who hadst mercy on me, when not yet confessing it)—when for Thee

[1] Luke xv. 16.

[2] The Manichæans held that on the side of the great and holy land was a deep and immense region of darkness, in which there were five elements, viz. vapour, darkness, fire, water, and wind; and that each element produced a chief, who in that particular region or nation bore rule under "the cruel prince and leader of all."

[3] Prov. ix. 18.

I sought, not according to the understanding of the mind—that faculty whereby Thou didst will that I should be superior to the beasts—but according to the sense of the flesh. But Thou wert deeper within me than my deepest thought, and higher than my highest. I came upon that bold woman, void of wisdom, according to Solomon's parable, "sitting at the door, and saying, Eat ye bread of secrecy freely, and drink stolen waters which are sweet;"[1] she seduced me, because she found me dwelling on outward objects, and ruminating on such food, as with the eye of flesh I had swallowed down.

CHAPTER VII.

The Doctrine of the Manichaeans, to which he had given his Adhesion, absurd.

FOR I did not know of anything else which really existed; and I was as it were adroitly persuaded to cast in my lot with foolish deceivers, who put to me the question, "Whence is evil?" and, "Is God enclosed by a bodily form, having hair and nails?" and, "Are those men to be accounted righteous who had many wives at once, and those who killed men, and those who offered animals in sacrifice?" These questions perplexed me very much, in my ignorance, and when I was going away from the truth, I thought to myself that I was making towards it; for I did not yet know, that evil was nothing else but the privation of good until at last a thing had no existence remaining to it. And how should I see this, as my eyes *reached only to* bodies, and my mind only to material

[1] Prov. ix. 13-17.

conceptions? And I knew not that "God was a Spirit," and that as such, He had neither members, nor height, nor breadth, nor bulk; for that which has bulk is less in a part than in the whole, and if it is infinite, it will be less than infinite in some circumscribed part; and cannot be everywhere whole, as a Spirit, as God. And what that could be in us, according to which we were like unto God, and were rightly said in Scripture to be "after the image of God,"[1] I had no idea.

And I did not know that true inward righteousness, which does not judge by custom, but according to the most righteous law of God, by which the manners of countries and times were suited to those different countries and times—a law which is always and everywhere the same, and not one thing at one time or place, and another at another; according to this law, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David were righteous, and all those who have been commended by the Mouth of God: but the same persons were condemned by foolish men, who "judge according to man's day,"[2] and measure the manners of the whole human race by their own narrow rule. As if any one who knew nothing of armour, and was ignorant of the member of the body to which each piece belonged, should cover his head with greaves, or try to put the helmet on his feet, and then complain that they did not fit; or, as if on a day when there was a public suspension of business in the afternoon, any one should be vexed that he was not allowed to keep his shop open, because in the morning he had been allowed to carry on his trade; or when in one house he should complain, because some servant took a thing

[1] Gen. i. 27. [2] 1 Cor. iv. 3.

in his hands, which usually the butler is not allowed to touch; or something done behind the stables, which is not permitted in the dining-room; and should be indignant because in one family and household, all have not precisely the same arrangements. Such are those who are vexed, when they hear that in one age something was lawful for just men, which is now forbidden them; and that for certain reasons connected with the times, God commanded one thing then, and commands another thing now, and both obeyed the same righteousness: when they see, in one man and one day and one house, different things suited to different members, and one thing which was a little time since lawful, after a while not so; and a thing permitted or enjoined in one corner, justly forbidden or punished in another. Is justice, then, a variable and changeable thing? No, but the times vary, over which it presides; for they are only times. But men—whose life on earth is short—because they have not the power to fit together the causes which operated in past times and other nations, of which they have had no experience, with those which they have experienced; whereas in one body, time, or household they can easily see what is fitting for each member, season, part, or person; take offence at the former, but concur with the latter.

These things at that time I did not know, and did not observe; though they met my eye on every side, yet I did not see them. In making verses, I was not allowed to place every foot everywhere, but I had to arrange each foot according to the particular metre, and in no single verse the same foot in all places; yet the art itself of versification embraced within one principle all these various measures. And I did not

see that the law of righteousness which good and holy men obeyed, did in a far more sublime and excellent manner contain in one all that God commanded, and was in itself unchangeable; and yet it was not all at once enjoined, but at various times, according to the requirements and capacities of each succeeding age. I then, in my blindness, found fault with the holy patriarchs, not only for using things in their day, such as God commanded and inspired them to use; but also for their prophetic actions, whereby God was revealing in them things to come.

CHAPTER VIII.

He argues against the Manichaeans, as to what Offences are always detestable, and what are Crimes.

WAS it ever then or anywhere unjust "to love God with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind, and to love our neighbour as ourself"?[1] Therefore unnatural crimes have been at all times and in all places detested and punished, such, for instance, as were those of the men of Sodom. For all nations, if they committed such offences, would stand equally guilty at the bar of the Law of God, Who hath not made men for such an end. For that fellowship which we should have with God is violated, when that nature of which He is the Author is polluted by a perverted lust. But offences which are simply against customs, are to be avoided according to the custom which prevails at the particular time; so that an agreement made by any city or nation, and ratified by law and

[1] Matt. xxii. 37-39.

custom, may not be violated by any citizen or stranger at will. For any part, which does not accord with its whole, is unseemly. But when God at any time commands a thing to be done, which is contrary to the custom or agreement of any nation, though it had never been done before, it must be done; and if it had been omitted, it must be reinstated; and if it had never been enjoined before, it must now become binding. For if a king is allowed in the state over which he rules to command something, which no one before him, nor he himself before that time, had ever commanded; and to obey *him* would not be contrary to civil society, nay, to disobey him would (for to obey rulers is indeed a general compact of civil society); how much more to God, the Ruler of all creation, ought we to yield an unhesitating obedience, in those things which He commands! For as amongst the powers of human society, obedience to the greater stands before obedience to the lesser, so obedience to God must stand before all other.

Also in acts of violence, where the desire to do another an injury either in character or in person exists, and where either takes place for the sake of revenge, as in the case of one enemy against another; or for gain of something which another possesses, as the robber with a traveller; or to avoid some evil which another may inflict; or through envy, when one is less fortunate than another, or when one more prosperous in some particular, fears lest he should be equalled by another, or grieves that he has a rival; or for the mere pleasure of seeing another suffer, as spectators of gladiators, and those who delight in teasing and mocking others: these are the heads of sins which spring

from the pride of life,[1] the lust of the eye and the lust of the flesh, either from one or both, or from all together, and thus men transgress the two tables of the law, the three and seven commandments,[2] "the instrument of ten strings,"[3] Thy decalogue, O God most high and most sweet. But what foul offences can be committed against Thee, Whose Being can suffer no defilement? or what acts of violence can be done against Thee, to Whom pain is impossible? But Thou punishest that which men commit against themselves, because when they do harm to their own souls they sin against Thee, and "iniquity lieth to itself"[4] by corrupting and perverting that nature of theirs which Thou hast made and ordered, either by the excessive use of what is permitted, or in things not permitted by an inflamed desire after "that use which is against nature;"[5] or they are guilty in thought and word of raging against Thee and "kicking against the pricks;"[6] or breaking through the limits of human society, they with effrontery delight in secret connections and separations to satisfy their desire or their pique. And these things they do when they have forsaken Thee, O Fountain of Life, Who art the Sole and True Creator and Ruler of the Universe, and through a selfish pride centre their love on one false object in a corner of it. Therefore we must return to Thee with humble affection, and be cleansed from our

[1] 1 John ii. 16.

[2] S. Augustine prefers the division of the commandments into three and seven, to the division into four and six. Both modes of dividing them existed then as now.

[3] Ps. cxliv. 9.

[4] Ps. xxvii. 12, V.

[5] *Rom. i.*

[6] Acts ix. 5.

evil habits; and Thou wilt be gracious to us, confessing our sins, and wilt "hear the groaning of the prisoner,"[1] and wilt loose us from the chains which we have made for ourselves, if we do not lift up against Thee the horns of a false liberty, and by coveting to have more, incur the loss of all, by loving our own private good more than Thee, the universal Good.

CHAPTER IX.

The Difference between Sins, and between the Judgment of God and of Man respecting them.

BUT among these foul offences, deeds of violence, and so many iniquities, are the sins of men who have already made progress; sins, condemned by those who rightly judge according to the law of perfection, yet the persons are commended in hope of future fruit, as the green blade in view of the wheat which it may produce. And there are some actions, which resemble these foul or violent offences, and yet are not sins, because they neither offend our Lord God, nor are they injurious to society; as when, for instance, things suitable to the times are amassed for the use of life, and it is doubtful whether this course is prompted by covetousness or not; or, when for the sake of correction persons are punished by a lawful authority, and it does not appear whether it is not done out of a desire to inflict injury. Many actions, then, which seem to men blameworthy, are approved by Thy testimony; and many, on the other hand, which are *praised by men*, are condemned in Thy sight; because

[1] Ps. cii. 20.

the outward appearance of the action, and the motive of the doer, and the hidden necessity of the moment, are not always alike. But when Thou dost on a sudden command some unusual and unexpected act, even if it were one which Thou hadst previously forbidden, and one the cause for which we could not at the time discern, and although, moreover, it should come into collision with established customs of some human society, who doubts but that the command must be obeyed, seeing that the justice of any human society depends upon its obedience to Thee? But blessed are those who know that they act under Thy command. For all things were done by Thy servants, in order that they might exhibit something necessary for the present, or that they might typify something for the future.

CHAPTER X.

The Follies of the Manichaeans concerning the Fruits of the Earth.

FROM my ignorance on these subjects, I derided Thy holy servants and prophets; and in deriding them, what did I gain but to be derided by Thee; and I gradually and imperceptibly was brought to such follies, as to believe that a fig-tree wept when a fig was plucked, and that the tree, its mother, shed milky tears! which fig, however, if a so-called saint had eaten —plucked it may be, not by his own, but by another's guilt—and had digested, he might breathe out of it angels, nay, particles of Deity, at every groan in prayer and eructation; which particles of the most *high and true* God would have remained pent up in

the fruit, had not some so-called elect saint set them free by his teeth and stomach. And I, wretched man, believed that more mercy was to be shown to the fruits of the earth, than to men for whom they were made. For if any one who was hungry, and was not a Manichæan, should ask for any, I should have regarded the morsel which was given him as condemned to capital punishment.

CHAPTER XI.

His Mother's Tears, and her Dream about her Son.

AND "Thou sentest Thy Hand from above,"[1] and from that profound darkness "didst deliver my soul,"[2] when my mother, Thy faithful one, wept for me to Thee, more than mothers weep over the dead bodies of their children. For she, through that faith and the spirit which Thou hast given her, saw my death; and Thou didst hearken to her, O Lord. Thou didst hearken to her, and didst not despise her tears, when in streams they rolled down her cheeks on the ground, wherever she prayed; Thou didst hearken to her. For whence came that dream, by which Thou didst console her, which led her to allow me again to live under the same roof with her, and to have my meals with her; for she had begun to shun this, from her hatred and detestation of my blasphemous errors? In that dream, she saw herself standing on a certain wooden rule, and a radiant youth coming towards her, bright and smiling upon her, when she was sorrowful and worn out with sorrow;

[1] *Ps. cxliv. 7.* [2] Ps. lxxxvi. 13.

then he asked her the causes of her grief and her daily tears, wishing to teach and not to be taught, as their custom is, and she replied that she was weeping over my ruin; he bade her to be quite at rest, and told her to look and see "that where she was, I was also." And when she looked, she saw me standing by her on the same rule. From whence was this, but because Thou didst hearken to the desire of her heart? O Thou Good and Almighty One, Who so carest for each one of us, as if Thou hadst no one else to care for; and so for all, as for each!

Whence also was this, that when she told me her dream, and I tried to make it mean, "that she rather should not despair of being one day what I was," she, unshaken by what I said, forthwith replied, "No, not so; for it was not said to me, 'Where he is, there also are you;' but, 'Where you are, there also is he'"? I confess to Thee, O Lord, that to the best of my recollection (and I have often spoken of it), that Thy answer—given from the lips of my mother, when awake, who was uninfluenced by the plausibility of my explanation, and so quickly discerned the truth, which I had failed to see before she pointed it out; moved me more than the dream itself, which, though it only predicted a joy which was yet in the distance, brought to the holy woman solace in her present anguish. For during almost nine years after that time, I wallowed in the mire of the pit and in the darkness of error, and when often I thought to rise, I sunk still deeper: all which time that chaste, affectionate, and prudent widow (such as Thou lovest)—now indeed with a brighter hope, yet not relaxing in her weeping and sighs—never ceased at all hours to pour forth her

lamentation before Thee concerning me; and her "prayer entered into Thy presence,"[1] and yet Thou sufferedst me to become more and more involved in that darkness.

CHAPTER XII.

What Answer the Mother of Augustine received from a certain Bishop, concerning his Conversion.

AND Thou gavest my mother another answer to her prayers, which I remember; for much I am passing by, as I am hurrying on to matters which urge me the more strongly to confess unto Thee, and many things I do not recollect. This answer, then, Thou gavest through Thy priest, a certain bishop he was, brought up in the Church, and versed in Thy books. My mother asked this man to grant me an interview, and refute my errors, and unteach me the evil I had learned, and teach me what was good (for this was his practice, when he found persons properly disposed); but he refused, wisely too, as I afterwards perceived. For he answered that I was as yet not docile, but puffed up with the novelty of that heresy, and—for she had told him this—that I had already puzzled many unlearned persons with certain questions. "But let him alone," saith he, "and only pray to the Lord for him: he himself by reading will discover his error, and the greatness of its impiety." At the same time he related, how himself, when he was a little boy, had been handed over to the Manichæans by his misguided mother, and had not only read almost all their *books, but had* also copied them out, and had, without

[1] Ps. lxxxviii. 2.

any argument or persuasion from any one, discovered how much that sect ought to be abjured; and he therefore had abjured it. When he had said this, and she still would not be satisfied, but besought him with entreaties and floods of tears to see me, and argue with me, he by this time, becoming a little vexed at her importunity, said, "Go away; farewell, for it cannot be that the son of such tears should perish," which words she received, as she often recorded in conversation with me, as though they had been spoken from heaven.

BOOK IV.

His shame at having been a Manichæan from nineteen to eight-and-twenty, and because he had drawn others into the same error; also that he had consulted astrologers: meanwhile his friend was snatched away by death, whereupon he gave way to inordinate grief; he relates his remarkable conversion and death; of vain and solid friendship, and of the shortness and changeableness of all earthly things, he treats at some length; he makes mention of his books on "the Beautiful and Fitting" written by him in his twenty-sixth or seventh year, also how easily he by himself gained a knowledge of the liberal sciences, and of the "Categories" of Aristotle.

CHAPTER I.

How long a Time, and in what Manner, he deceived others.

THROUGH this period of nine years, namely, from nineteen to twenty-eight, we were seduced and seducing, deceived and deceiving, in various evil passions; openly by what they call liberal sciences, secretly by what was falsely called religion: in the one proud, in the other superstitious; in both vain—seeking the emptiness of popular praise, even the applause of the theatres, and the prizes for verses, and the struggle for withering garlands, and the follies of shows, and the gratification of ungoverned desires. And there desiring to be cleansed from these defilements, by bringing food to those who were called "the elect" *and "the saints,"* which in the laboratory of their

stomach they might mould into angels and gods by whom they were to be delivered. Such things did I, in company with my friends, seek and practise, they being deceived by me, and with me.

Let the proud deride me, and such as have not been savingly cast down and smitten by Thee, my God; but as for me, I would confess to Thee my own shame to Thy praise. Suffer me, I beseech Thee, and enable me to travel over now in my memory all my past wandering courses, and "to offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving."[1] For what am I to myself without Thee, but a headlong guide? or what am I when it is well with me, but an infant sucking Thy milk, or enjoying Thee, "the food that perisheth not"?[2] And what is man after all, whoever he may be, but man? But let the strong and the mighty laugh at us; nevertheless let us, "the poor and needy, confess unto Thee."[3]

CHAPTER II.

He teaches Rhetoric; lives in Concubinage; and scorns a Wizard who promised him Success.

DURING those years I taught rhetoric, and, myself conquered by cupidity, I sold to others the art of wordy conquest. Yet I preferred, O Lord, Thou knowest, to have honest scholars, as they are called; and these, without artifice, I taught artifices; not that they might use these arts against the life of the innocent, though they might sometimes exert them on behalf of the guilty. And Thou, O God, sawest me from afar sinking in the mire, and sending out some

[1] *Ps. l. 14.* [2] John vi. 27. [3] Ps. lxxiv. 21

sparks of faithfulness in a cloud of smoke,[1] which I exhibited in my office toward "such as loved vanity, and sought after leasing,"[2] myself being their companion. In those years I lived with one with whom I had not been joined in lawful wedlock, but whom my roving and impudent passion had found out; to that one I remained faithful, and thus indeed experienced in my own case what a difference there is between the duties of the covenant of marriage, performed for its appointed end, and the contracts of a sensual love, where children are born though undesired, and yet when born, become perforce objects of affection.

I remember also, when I had determined to try for a prize in poetry at the theatre, that a certain fortune-teller asked what I would give him in order to win; but I, detesting and abominating those foul mysteries, replied, "that though the crown were of an undying lustre, I would not permit a fly to be killed to gain me the victory." For he would have killed some living creatures, and by such honours appeared to render the devils propitious. But this evil also I repudiated, not out of loyal love for Thee, O God of my heart; for I did not know how to love Thee, seeing I had no higher conception of Thee than of a material radiance. And does not a soul, panting after such fictions, commit fornication against Thee, trust in falsehood, and "feed the winds"?[3] But I would not in truth have sacrifices offered to devils for me, to whom I sacrificed myself, however, by my superstition. For to "feed the winds," what else is it but to feed them, that is, by

[1] Isa. xlii. 3. Matt. xii. 20. [2] Ps. iv. 2.
[3] Hosea xii. 1.

going astray to become to them their sport and derision?

CHAPTER III.

From Astrology, to which he was devoted, by an old and learned Physician he was dissuaded.

BUT I made no scruple about consulting those impostors, whom they style astrologers, because they did not use sacrifices, nor pray to any spirit in their divinations; yet, true and Christian piety would reject and condemn them also. For it is a good thing to confess unto Thee, O Lord, and to say, "Have mercy upon me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee;"[1] and not to abuse Thy indulgence by turning it into a licence to sin, but to remember the Lord's words, "Behold thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come to thee."[2] All this sound advice they try to destroy, when they say, "The cause of your sin is inevitably determined from above;" and, "Venus caused this, or Saturn, or Mars." Thus, in order that man, indeed, flesh and blood, and proud rottenness, may be without fault, the Creator and Ruler of heaven and of the stars is to be blamed. And Who is He but our God, the Sweetness and Source of righteousness, Who "renderest to every man according to his works,"[3] and Who "wilt not despise a broken and humbled heart"?[4]

There was at that time a clever man, a very skilful physician and very famous in his profession, who, as proconsul, with his own hand had placed on my

[1] Ps. xli. 4.
[2] John v. 14.
[3] *Rom. ii. 6.* Matt. xvi. 27.
[4] Ps. li. 17.

diseased head the victor's wreath at the public games, not indeed as a physician, for I was suffering from a disease which none but Thyself could cure—Thou Who "resistest the proud, but givest grace to the humble."[1] But even through that old man didst Thou fail me, or forbear to bring healing to my soul? For as I grew more intimate with him, and became a constant and attentive listener to his discourses (for they were, not from a polished style, but from a certain liveliness of expression, most agreeable and earnest), he became aware from my conversation, that I was addicted to the practice of reading the books of these reckoners of birthdays; whereupon he kindly and fatherly advised me to cast them away, and not to take pains and trouble, necessary for useful things, on such fruitless vanities: saying, that he had himself studied that art, and in his early years had intended to make it his profession and thereby gain a livelihood, and that if he could understand Hippocrates, he certainly had ability enough to understand this art; and yet he had given it up, and taken to medicine, for no other cause but that he found the former had not a grain of truth in it, and that he, a grave man, could not persuade himself to seek a maintenance by deluding people. "And you," said he, "have the profession of rhetoric, whereby to gain your living, so that you follow this fallacious practice, not from necessity but of free choice; therefore you ought the more to listen to me, who laboured to master it so completely, as to make it my sole means of subsistence." And when I asked him, to account for many things having turned out to be true which *had been* foretold by it, he answered (as he could), that

[1] 1 Pet. v. 5. James iv. 6.

this was to be ascribed to chance, "a power which pervaded the whole order of things. For if, when any one by chance opens the pages of some poet whose song and theme were wholly different from the present business, a verse comes to his eye which marvellously fits in with it; how much more is it to be expected, that out of the human soul, through some higher instinct, unconscious of what it was doing, something should be uttered, which not by art but by chance harmonised with the concerns and actions of the inquirer."

And this indeed, from him or through him, Thou didst provide me with, and imprint upon my memory, which I might afterwards inquire into by myself. But at that time neither he, nor my dearest Nebridius, a youth very good and virtuous, deriding the whole system of divination, could persuade me to abjure it, the authority of those writers having more weight with me; and as yet I had not found any conclusive proof such as I sought after, that the true predictions of those who were consulted might be in all cases ascribed, not to the art of stargazing, but to chance or haphazard.

CHAPTER IV.

The Illness and Baptism of a Friend is related, one involved in the same Errors as himself; he grieves most bitterly over his Death. The wonderful Efficacy of the Sacrament of Baptism.

IN those years when I first began to teach in my native town, I had made a friend, one who, through having the same interests, was very dear to me, one of

my own age, and, like me, in the first flower of youth. We had grown up together, and went together to school, and used to play together. But he was not yet so great a friend as afterwards, nor even then was our friendship true; for friendship is not true, unless Thou cementest it between those who are united to Thee, by that "love which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost Which is given unto us."[1] Yet our friendship was but too sweet, and fermented by the pursuit of kindred studies. For I had turned him aside from the true faith (of which as a youth he had but an imperfect grasp) to pernicious and superstitious fables, for which my mother grieved over me. And now in mind he erred with me, and my soul could not endure to be separated from him. But lo, Thou didst follow close behind Thy fugitives, Thou—both "God of vengeance"[2] and Fountain of mercies—didst convert us by wonderful ways; behold, Thou didst take him out of this life, when scarcely a year had our close intimacy lasted—sweet to me beyond the sweetness of my whole life.

"Who can number all the blessings"[3] which he himself, apart from all others, has experienced? What didst Thou do then, O my God, and how unsearchable is "the abyss of Thy judgments"?[4] For a long while, having fallen sick of a fever, he lay insensible in a death-sweat. And when his recovery was despaired of, he was baptized, being still unconscious, I being indifferent to what was done, and feeling confident that his soul would retain what he had learned from me, rather than be affected by what was wrought on his

[1] Rom. v. 5.
[2] Ps. xciv. 1.
[3] Ps. cvi. 2.
[4] Ps. xxxvi. 6.

unconscious body. But it proved far otherwise; for he recovered, and got well again. And presently as soon as I could speak with him (for I could so soon as he was able, for I never left him, we were but too devoted to each other), I attempted to jest with him, under the idea that he would join with me in turning into ridicule that Baptism which in a state of utter unconsciousness he had received, though he had been since told of it. But he was horrified at me as at an enemy, and with a remarkable and unwonted freedom he bade me desist from such expressions, if I wished to remain his friend. But I was confounded and troubled, and I suppressed all my feelings till he should recover, and then I thought when he was strong enough again, I would deal with him as I wished. But he was taken out of the reach of my madness, that with Thee he might be preserved for my comfort; for a few days after, in my absence, he had a relapse which terminated fatally.

No ray of light pierced the gloom with which my heart was enveloped by this grief, and wherever I looked, I beheld death. My native place was a torment to me, and my father's house strangely joyless; and whatever I had shared with him, without him was now turned into a huge torture. My longing eyes sought him everywhere, and found him not; and I hated the very places, because he was not in them, neither could they say to me "he is coming," as they used to do when he was alive and was absent. And I became a great puzzle to myself, and I asked my soul why it was so sad, and why so "disquieted within me;"[1] and it knew not what to answer. And if I said, "Trust thou in God," it rightly did not obey; for that

[1] Ps. xlii. 5.

dearest one, whom it had lost, was both truer and better, than that phantasm in which it was bidden to trust. Weeping was the only thing which was sweet to me, and it succeeded my friend in the dearest place in my heart.

CHAPTER V.

Why Weeping is sweet to the Miserable.

AND now, Lord, these are things which are past, and time has healed my wound. May I learn from Thee, Who art the Truth, and lend my inmost ear to Thy Voice, that Thou mayest tell me why weeping is sweet to the miserable. Hast Thou, although present everywhere, cast away our misery far from Thee? And Thou abidest in Thyself; but we are tossed about in tribulations. And yet unless we wept in Thy Ears, all hope would have forsaken us. Whence, then, is sweet fruit gathered from life's bitterness, from groans and tears, from sighs and laments? Has it this sweetness, because we hope that Thou hearest? This is right as far as prayer is concerned, for then there is the desire to draw near to Thee. But how can it be true of sorrow or of a loss, and of such a bereavement as then overwhelmed me? For I neither hoped that he would return to life again, nor did I weep to obtain this; but I only grieved and wept. For I was miserable, and my joy was gone. Is weeping, then, a bitter thing, and is it from a loathing of the things we before enjoyed, when we at the time turn from them with a sort of abhorrence, that the pleasure *arises?*

CHAPTER VI.

How great his Sorrow from the Death of his Friend.

BUT why do I speak thus? for this is not the time for entering into questions, but for confessing to Thee. I was miserable, and miserable is every soul which is fettered by the love of perishable things; he is torn to pieces when he loses them, and then he perceives how miserable he was in reality whilst he possessed them. And so was I then, and I wept most bitterly, and in that bitterness I found rest. Thus I was miserable, and that miserable life I held dearer than my friend. For though I would fain have changed it, yet to it I clung even more than to him; and I cannot say whether I would have parted with it for his sake, as it is related, if true, that Orestes and Pylades were willing to do, for they would gladly have died for each other, or together, for they preferred death to separation from each other. But in me a feeling which I cannot explain, and one of a contradictory nature, had arisen; for I had at once an unbearable weariness of living, and a fear of dying. For I believe the more I loved him, the more I hated and dreaded death which had taken him from me, and regarded it as a most cruel enemy; and I felt as if it would soon devour all men, now that its power had reached him. Such, I remember, were my feelings. Behold my heart, O my God; look within me and see how I remember it, O my Hope, Thou Who cleansest me from the defilement of such affections, directing "*mine eyes to* Thee," and "plucking my feet out of

the snare."[1] For I marvelled that other mortals lived, because he whom I had loved, without thought of his ever dying, was dead; and that I still lived—I who was another self—when he was gone, was a greater marvel still. Well said a certain one, of his friend, "Thou half of my soul;"[2] for I felt that his soul and mine were "one soul in two bodies:"[3] and therefore life was to me horrible, because I hated to live as half of a life; and therefore, perhaps, I feared to die, lest he should wholly die, whom I had loved so greatly.

CHAPTER VII.

Through Impatience of Sorrow he leaves his Place.

O MADNESS, that knows not how to love men, as only men! O foolish man that I then was, taking too much to heart the events of life! Thus I gave way to a passionate grief, I sighed, I wept, I was distracted; neither could I find rest nor counsel. For I bore within me a wounded and bleeding soul, a soul impatient even of being borne by me, and where to rest it I found not. Neither in pleasant woods, nor in plays and concerts, nor in fragrant bowers, nor in sumptuous feasts, nor in the pleasures of repose and of the couch, nor, in short, in books and poems, could it find rest. All things had a ghastly appearance, even the very light itself; and everything that was not what he was, was offensive and hateful to me, except sighs and tears, for in those alone I found some little relief. But when my soul was dragged away from

[1] *Ps. xxv. 15.* [2] HOR. *Carm.* lib. i. od. 3.
[3] OVID, *Trist.* iv. eleg. iv. 72.

them, a vast load of misery weighed me down. To Thee, I know, O Lord, I should have lifted it up, for Thee to give it relief; but I neither had the will nor the power to do so, and the difficulty was the greater, because when I thought of Thee, nothing real and substantial presented itself to my mind. For it was not Thou, but an empty phantasm, and my own error which was my god. If I tried to cast my burden upon it, that my soul might rest, there was no solid support, but it fell as through an empty space, back upon me; and I remained to myself as a luckless place, where I could neither stay nor get away. For whither could my heart flee from my heart? whither could I flee from myself? whither should I not follow myself? I fled, however, from my own country; for my eyes would less look for him in a place where they had not been accustomed to see him. And thus from the town of Thagaste I came to Carthage.

CHAPTER VIII.

Time and Companionship allayed his Sorrow.

TIME does not stand still, neither does it idly roll away, but through our senses produces wonderful effects upon our mind. Behold, time came and passed day by day, and by coming and going, lodged in my mind new imaginations and new memories, and patched me up again gradually with my old delights, thus removing my sorrow; but other sorrows, or rather other causes of sorrow, came upon me. For how was it that former sorrow had so quickly and so deeply *entered into me*, but that "I had pouredout my soul

upon the sand,"[1] by loving a dying man, as if he were not subject to death? But chiefly the consolations of other friends revived and refreshed me, with whom I loved, what I loved instead of Thee; and this was a great fable, and elaborate lie, by whose adulterous titillation our mind, itching in our ears, was being corrupted. But that fable did not die to me, so oft as my friends died. They had other and greater attractions: to talk and laugh together; to do each other kindnesses; to read together books which accorded with our taste; to be playful together, and to be dignified in turn; to differ at times without discord, as if a man differed with himself, and by the very rare instances of differing to give a flavour to our habitual harmony of thought; to teach one another and to learn, by turns; to long impatiently for those absent, and to welcome joyfully their return:—these, and similar expressions of natural love, escaping from the heart through the features, the tongue, the eyes, and a thousand pleasing ways, were as so much fuel melting our souls, and out of many making one.

CHAPTER IX.

Concerning human Friendship. Blessed is he who loves in God.

THIS is what is loved between friends; and so loved, that a man's conscience would condemn him, were he not to love the one who loves in return, or not return the love of one who first offered it to *him, seeking* nothing from him personally but indi-

[1] Job xvi. 13.

cations of his goodwill. Hence that grief, when one dies, and that dark cloud of sorrow, and the heart steeped in tears, all sweetness turned into bitterness; and from the loss of the life of the dying, the death of the living. Blessed is he who loves Thee, and his friend in Thee, and his enemy for Thee. For he alone loses no one dear to him, to whom all are dear in Him Who can never be lost. And who is this but our God, the God Who "made heaven and earth[1] and filleth them,"[2] for by filling them, He made them? No one loses Thee, but he who forsakes Thee; and he who forsakes Thee, whither can he go, or whither can he fly, unless from Thee, favourable, to Thee, offended? For where will he not find Thy Law in his own punishment? And "Thy Law is truth,"[3] and "Thou art truth."[4]

CHAPTER X.

Creatures are perishable, and the Soul cannot find rest in them.

"TURN Thou us, O God of Hosts, and show us Thy Countenance, and we shall be whole."[5] For whichever way the soul of man turns itself, unless towards Thee, it cleaves to sorrows, even though it fastens itself on things which are beautiful, apart from Thee and apart from itself. Which things could not exist, except they came from Thy Hand; things which rise and set, and by rising, begin as it were to be, and increase until they reach their per-

[1] Gen. ii. 4. [2] Jer. xxiii. 24. [3] Ps. cxix. 142.
[4] *John xiv. 6* [5] Ps. lxxx. 19.

fection, and then, when perfect, begin to wane and die; for do not all things wax old, and fade away? Thus when they rise and tend to be, the more quickly they advance towards what they are to be, so much the more do they hasten to their end; this is the way of them. Thou hast given them their measure, because they are parts of things, the whole of which does not exist at once; but by their departure, and by others taking their places, they together make up that universe of which they are the parts. For thus it is when we speak, we use a succession of significant sounds; for the sentence could not be completed unless each word, when its syllables have been uttered, give place to the word which is to follow it. Out of these things let my soul, O Lord, Creator of all, take occasion to praise Thee; but let it not by the glue of love stick fast to these things through the bodily senses. For they go whither they were to go, and so cease to be; and they rend the soul with pestilent desires, because it longs for them to be, and loves to rest in the things it loves. But it cannot rest in them, because they do not abide, but are transitory; for who can follow them with his bodily senses? or who can lay hold of them, when they are quite near? For the sense of the flesh is slow, because it is the sense of the flesh, and itself is its limit. It is sufficient for the purpose for which it was made; but it does not suffice to stay things, which are pursuing their course from their appointed beginning to their appointed end. For in Thy word, by which they were created, there they hear, "Hence, and thus far."

CHAPTER XI.

All created Things are unstable, God alone abiding.

BE not vain, O my soul, and deafen not the ear of thine heart by the tumult of thy vanity. Hearken too, the Word itself calls thee to return; and there you shall find a place of undisturbed rest, where love is never forsaken, if it does not forsake. Behold these things pass away, that others may take their place, and this lower universe is thus completed in all its parts. But do I pass away? saith the Word of God. There fix thy dwelling then; there commit all thou hast, O my soul, at least now when thou art wearied out by deceptions. Commit to the Truth whatever the Truth hath given thee, and thou shalt lose nothing; and what has been decayed in thee shall bloom again, and "all thy diseases shall be healed,"[1] and thy frail members shall be re-formed and renewed, and knit together to thee again: nor shall they, as they hang down, bring Thee low with them, but with thee shall stand, and for ever abide before that God "Who remaineth and abideth for ever."[2]

Why then be perverted and follow the flesh? Let the flesh rather be converted and follow thee. Whatever thou perceivest through it, is in part; and thou knowest not the whole of which these are parts, and yet the parts give Thee delight. But if the whole could at once be brought within the range of the sense of thy flesh, and that sense had not itself been restricted for thy punishment to only a part, thou wouldest

[1] *Ps. ciii.* [2] 1 Pet. i. 23.

'came into this world to save sinners,'[1] to Whom my soul confesses, and 'He healeth it, for it had sinned against Him.'[2] 'O ye sons of men, how long will ye be so slow of heart?'[3] Will ye not then, after the descent of Life, ascend and live? But how can ye ascend, when 'ye are on high, and set your mouth against the heavens'?[4] Descend, that ye may ascend, and ascend to God. For ye fell, by ascending against Him."[5] Tell them this, that they may weep "in this vale of tears,"[6] and so draw them with you to God; for out of His Spirit you tell them this, if you speak, burning with the fire of love.

CHAPTER XIII.

Whence Love originates.

THESE things then I did not know, and I was in love with lower forms of beauty, and I was sinking into the very depths, and I said to my friends, "Do we love anything but the beautiful? What then is the beautiful? and what is beauty? What is it which allures and wins us in the things we love? For unless they had some grace and fairness, they would present no attraction." And I considered and saw in bodies

[1] 1 Tim. i. 15.
[2] Ps. xli. 4.
[3] Ps. iv. 3, V.
[4] Ps. lxxiii. 9.
[5] S. Bernard says: "Woe to those who will to follow him who says, 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also on the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.' . . . Who shall teach us a safe way of ascending? who—but He of Whom it is written, 'He that descended is the same also that ascended'?" Humiliation must precede exaltation.
[6] Ps. lxxxiv. 6.

which had beauty, that it had its source in a certain completeness which they possessed, and in a certain proportion between its parts, as of one part of the body with the whole, or as of a shoe with the foot, and the like. And this was an original idea, which sprung out of my inmost heart; and I wrote the books "on the Fair and Fit"—I think, two or three. Thou knowest, O God; for I have forgotten them; for I do not retain them, but they have passed out of my mind, I know not how.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Books concerning the "Fair and the Fit" are dedicated to Hierius. What led to his loving him.

BUT what moved me, O Lord my God, to dedicate these books to Hierius, an orator of the city of Rome, whose face I had never seen, but whom I had loved on account of the fame of his learning, for he was renowned; and on account of some words of his which I had heard and which pleased me? But he pleased me more, because he pleased others, who cried him up, wondering that, from a Syrian, first trained in Greek eloquence, should afterwards be found a remarkable Latin orator, and one very skilful in things which belong to the study of philosophy. A man is praised, and, though absent, loved. Does such a love flow into the heart of the hearer from the mouth of the one who praises? no, indeed; but from one who loves, another catches the fire. For hence he is loved who is praised, when the one who praises speaks out of a sincere heart; that is, when he loves, as well as praises him.

But my love for men then was regulated by human

opinion, not by Thy judgment, O my God, which deceives no one. But yet why should I not praise him, as I should a famous charioteer, as one who wins applause far and wide as a fighter with beasts, yet very differently and seriously, and as I should wish to be praised myself? For I should have no desire to be praised and loved, as stage-players are—though I myself praised and loved them—but I would rather be unknown than so known, and even hated than so loved. Where are places in one soul for such varied and opposite tendencies of the affections? How is it that I love in another that which, if I did not hate, I could not view with abhorrence and reject from myself, since we are both equally men? For it is not the same thing, as when a good horse is loved by one, who, if he could, would not wish to be that horse; for the actor has the same nature as we have. Do I then love in a man that which I hate to be, being a man myself? Man himself is a great abyss, whose "hairs Thou numberest,"[1] O Lord, and they are not lost in Thy Sight; and yet his hairs are more easily numbered than his affections, and the movements of his heart.

But that orator was of the kind I loved, and wished to be myself; and I erred through pride, and "was tossed about with every wind," and yet was steered by Thee very secretly. And whence do I know, and whence do I with certainty acknowledge to Thee, that I had loved him for the love of those who praised him, rather than for the things themselves for which he was praised? For if, instead of praising him, the selfsame men had condemned him, and with blame and scorn had related the same things of him, I should

[1] Matt. x. 30.

never have been so inflamed and stirred with the love of him. And yet the things would have been the same, and the man the same; and the only difference would have been in the feelings of those who spoke of him. Behold where the soul lies prostrate with weakness, cleaving not yet to the solidity of truth! As blasts of tongues issue forth from the breasts of the opinionative, so is it carried hither and thither, driven forward and backward, and its light is overclouded, and the truth is not discerned; and behold it is before our eyes. And to me it was a great thing, that my style and labours should be brought under the notice of such a man; of which if he approved, I should be the more kindled towards him; but if he disapproved, my heart, vain, and with nothing solid upon which to fall back, would be wounded. And yet "the Fair and Fit," of which I had written to him, I turned over in my mind with delight, and with the gaze of contemplation admired it, though none praised it with me.

CHAPTER XV.

Being blinded by Corporeal Images, he was incapable of grasping Spiritual Things.

BUT I did not yet see the hinge on which the whole matter turned in Thy design, O Thou Omnipotent One, "Who only doest wonders;"[1] and my mind ran through corporeal forms; and "Fair" I defined and distinguished to be that which is so in itself, and "Fit" that which corresponds to some other thing, and I supported these definitions by corporeal

[1] Ps. cxxxvi. 4.

examples. And I turned to contemplate the nature of the mind, but the false notions with which I was possessed about spiritual things hindered me from discerning the truth. Yet bright flashes of truth did from time to time break upon my sight, and I turned away my panting spirit from that which was incorporeal, to lineaments, and colours, and expanding magnitudes. And because I could not find those attributes in my mind, I thought I could not see my mind. I saw virtue was to be loved because it brought peace, and vice to be hated because it had discord; in the one I noted unity, in the other division. And I imagined that in that unity, the rational mind, and the nature of truth and of the sovereign good, consisted; and that on the other hand, in division, the irrational life and the sovereign evil in some way, I know not how, had a substance and nature, and not only a substance, but I, wretched, supposed it to have a real life, though a life never given by Thee, my God, of Whom are all things. And yet the first I distinguished as a Monad, as it were, a mind without a partner; but the latter as a Duad, anger and lust, the one manifested by violence, the other by impurity, not knowing of what I spoke. For I had not known, neither had I learned that evil was not a substance, and that our soul was not the sovereign and unchangeable good.

For as deeds of violence take place, if the irascible element of the soul be viciously excited and allowed to behave itself insolently and turbulently; and impurity is the result, when the desire of the soul, in which carnal pleasures are thirsted for, is indulged, so errors and false opinions stain the life, when the

reasonable soul is itself depraved; as it was in me, who knew not, that to become partaker of the truth, there was need of illumination from another light, because itself is not that very nature of truth. "For Thou shalt light my candle, O Lord my God, Thou shalt enlighten my darkness;"[1] and "of Thy fulness have we all received,"[2] for "Thou art the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" for "in Thee there is no variableness, neither the shadow of turning."[3]

But I ventured towards Thee, and was thrust from Thee, that I might taste of death, for "Thou resistest the proud."[4] But what more proud, than for me with a wonderful madness to assert that I was by nature what Thou art? For seeing that I was subject to change—and a proof of this I had in my very wish to become wise, for it was a desire to change for the better;—yet I preferred to conceive of Thee as changeable, than to imagine myself not to be what Thou art. Therefore I was thrust away from Thee, for Thou resistedst my stiff-neckedness: and I dwelt on corporeal forms, and I flesh, accused the flesh, and being "a wind that passeth away, returned not"[5] to Thee; but wandering, I wandered on to things which have no being, neither in Thee, nor in me, nor in the body; neither were they created for me by Thy Truth, but by my vanity formed out of corporeal objects. And I used to ask Thy faithful children, my fellow-citizens, from whom I was separated as an exile, though I knew it not—I used to ask them, in a garrulous and foolish manner, "Why then does the soul err which God

[1] Ps. xviii. 28. [2] John i. 16, 9. [3] James i. 17.
[4] 1 Pet. v. 5. James iv. 6. [5] Ps. lxxviii. 39.

made?" And I would not have them ask me, "Why then does God err?" And I rather contended that Thy changeless being did err involuntarily, than acknowledge that my changeable being had by its free choice gone astray, and now, as a punishment, erred.

I was then, perhaps, about twenty-six or twenty-seven years old when I wrote those volumes, revolving with myself on those corporeal fictions which buzzed in the ears of my heart; which I bent to Thy inward melody, O sweet Truth, thinking of "the fair and the fit" and longing to stand and hear Thee, and "to rejoice greatly at the Bridegroom's Voice,"[1] and I could not; for by the sounds of my own errors, I was hurried away, and through the weight of my pride, I was sinking to the bottom. For "Thou didst not make me hear of joy and gladness, nor did my bones rejoice, which were not yet humbled."[2]

CHAPTER XVI.

He could without Assistance understand the Categories of Aristotle, and the Liberal Arts.

AND what advantage was it to me, that when I was hardly twenty years old, a book of Aristotle's fell into my hands, which they called the "Ten Predicaments,"[3] on whose name, when it was uttered by my rhetoric master at Carthage—his cheeks puffed with pride—and by others who had a reputation for

[1] John iii. 29. [2] Ps. li. 8.

[3] The "Ten Predicaments" were the manifold relations of *things. These are* "substance, quantity, quality, relation, place, *time, position,* possession, action, and suffering."

learning, I hung as upon something great and divine, which I would fain drink in; and that I read it and understood it, without any help from others? And when I conferred with others who said that they scarcely understood the book, though they had read it with the assistance of very able masters, who explained it to them not only by words but by illustrations drawn on the sand, they could tell me no more of it than I had learned from reading it by myself. The book seemed to me clearly enough to speak of substances, such as a man is, and of their qualities. Thus, the figure of a man, what it is; and his stature, how many feet it is; and his relationship, whose brother he is; or where he is placed; or when he was born; or whether he stands or sits; or whether he is shod or armed; or what he does or suffers; and all the numberless things which may be included in his nine Categories, of which I have given instances, or in that of substance itself.

What did this profit me, seeing indeed it stood in my way? when even Thee, my God, wondrously Simple and Changeless, I thought to include, with all else, under these Ten Predicaments, and tried to understand Thee, as if Thou hadst been subjected to Thy own Greatness and Beauty, so that, as in a body, they should be in Thee as in their subject; whereas Thy Greatness and Beauty is Thyself, but greatness and beauty are but an accidental accompaniment of a body, which would be still a body though it were less great and less beautiful. For it was not a true, but a false idea which I entertained of Thee—fictions of my own misery, not the firm foundations of Thy Blessedness. For Thou hast commanded, and so it came to pass in me, that the "earth should bring forth briers

and thorns to me," and that "with labour I should get my bread."[1]

And what did it profit me, that I read and understood by myself all the books I could get of the so-called liberal arts—I, all the while the most vile slave of evil passions? And I delighted in them, and knew not whence the gleams of reality and truth came. For I had my back to the light, and my face to those things upon which it was shining; whence my face, by which I discerned the objects which received the light, was not itself illumined. Whatever was written concerning the art of speaking, or of reasoning, whatever, concerning geometry, music, and arithmetic, without much difficulty, and without a master, I learned, Thou knowest, O Lord my God; for quickness of comprehension, and acuteness in discerning is Thy gift; but I did not offer it as a sacrifice to Thee. Therefore it was of no use to me, but rather ministered to my perdition, because I busied myself to have in my own power so good a "portion of my substance;"[2] and "I kept not my strength for Thee,"[3] but set out "into a far country" away from Thee, "to squander it upon harlots"—evil desires. For what did a good thing profit me, when not used in a good way? For I was not aware with what difficulty those arts must be attained, even by the studious and clever, until I tried to explain them to them; and he most excelled in them who was not quite as slow as others in following my expositions.

But what profit was it to me, to suppose that Thou, O Lord God, the Truth, wast a lucid and vast body, *and I a fragment* of that body? O too great perverse-

[1] *Gen. iii. 18, 19.* [2] Luke xv. 12, 13, 30. [3] Ps. lix. 10.

ness! But such I was. Nor do I blush, O my God, to "confess to Thee Thy Mercies towards me," and to call upon Thee, I who did not blush then to profess my blasphemies before men, and to bark against Thee. For what did it profit me to possess a mind quick in those sciences, and to be able to unravel those many knotty volumes without the aid of a human instructor; when I was erring so basely, and with sacrilegious foulness, in the doctrine of piety? or what disadvantage was it to Thy children to be of a slower understanding, seeing that they did not depart far from Thee, that they might safely become fledged in the nest of Thy Church, and nourish the wings of charity with the food of a sound faith? O Lord our God, "under the shadow of Thy Wings let us put our trust;"[1] and do Thou protect us, and bear us up. "Thou wilt carry us both when little ones, and even to hoar hairs wilt Thou carry us."[2] Because when Thou art our Strength, it is strength indeed; but when it is our own, it is weakness. Our good ever lives with Thee; from which, therefore, when we turn away, we are perverted. Let us return then, O Lord, that we be not overturned; for our good liveth with Thee without any decay, for Thou art it Thyself; and we need not fear that there is no place to which to return, because we fell from it; for because of our absence, our home—Thy eternity—did not go to ruin.

[1] Ps. lxiii. 8. [2] Isa. xlvi. 3, 4.

BOOK V.

He describes his twenty-ninth year, in which, having discerned the ignorance of Faustus, a Manichæan, in those things in which they boasted that they possessed divine knowledge, he was led to entertain the idea of going no further in that sect. He is guided by the Providence of God to Rome, where he taught rhetoric, and thence to Milan, where he was occupied in the same way. There he heard S. Ambrose, and began to repent, and having abjured Manichæism, he determined again to become a Catechumen in the Catholic Church.

CHAPTER I.

He excites his Soul to praise God.

ACCEPT the sacrifice of my confessions from the hand of my tongue, which Thou hast formed and stirred up to confess unto Thy Name: "Heal all my bones, and let them say: Lord, who is like unto Thee?"[1] For he who confesses to Thee, does not make Thee know what passes within him, seeing that a closed heart does not close Thine Eye, and man's hardness does not repel Thine Hand; but Thou dissolvest it when Thou wilt, either in pity or vengeance; and "there is nothing which can hide itself from Thy heat."[2] But let my soul praise Thee, that it may love Thee; and confess Thy Mercies to Thee, that it may praise Thee. Thy whole creation ceases not, nor is ever silent in Thy praises; neither the spirit of man *with* voice turned to Thee, nor any creature animate

[1] *Ps. xxxv. 10.* [2] Ps. xix. 6.

or inanimate, but has the voice for Thee of those who meditate thereon; that so our souls may out of their weariness rise up to Thee, leaning on the things which Thou hast made, and making them stepping-stones to Thee, Who madest them wonderfully—to Thee, for there is refreshment and true strength.

CHAPTER II.

That the Wicked, as they cannot escape the Presence of God, ought to be converted to Him.

LET the restless and the wicked depart and flee from Thee; yet Thou seest them, and dividest the darkness; and behold all things with them are fair, and they themselves are foul. And how have they injured Thee? or in what have they brought dishonour upon Thy Government, which, from the heaven to the lowest depth, is just and perfect? For whither did they flee, when they fled from Thy Face? or where dost Thou not find them out? But they fled that they might not see "Thee seeing them,"[1] and blinded, might stumble against Thee; because "Thou forsakest nothing that Thou hast made;"[2] that the unjust might stumble against Thee, and be justly tormented; leaving Thy Gentleness, and stumbling upon Thy Uprightness, and falling on their own roughness. Indeed, they knew not that Thou art everywhere, and that no place can enclose Thee, and that Thou alone art present, even to those who are far from Thee. Let them then be converted and seek Thee; for not as they have deserted their Creator,

[1] *Ps. cxxxix. 7.* Gen. xvi. 14. [2] Wisd. xi. 25.

eclipse of the sun, which is not to take place for so long a time, but they perceive not that eclipse which is upon them in the present. For they do not religiously inquire who gives them the ability to discover these things. And finding that Thou hast made them, they do not give themselves to Thee, that Thou mayest preserve what Thou madest, and do not, such as they have made themselves, sacrifice themselves to Thee, and slay all vaunting thoughts as "birds of the air,"[1] and all curious speculations as "the fishes of the sea," with which they walk, as it were, through the secret paths of the deep, and all sensual desires as "the beasts of the field," that Thou, O God, Who art "a consuming fire,"[2] mayest devour their dead cares, and renew them with immortality.

But they did not know the way, Thy "Word,"[3] by which Thou madest the things which they reckoned, and themselves who reckon, and the sense by which they distinguish the objects they reckon, and the understanding by which they reckon; and "of Thy Wisdom there is no number."[4] But He, the Only-Begotten, was "made to us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification;"[5] and was numbered amongst us, and "paid tribute to Cæsar."[6] They did not know this Way, by which to descend to Him from themselves, and then through Him ascend to Him. They did not know this Way, and thought themselves to be exalted and lustrous like the stars; and lo, they "fell upon the earth,"[7] and "their foolish heart was darkened."[8] Yet many true things they say of the

[1] *Ps.* viii. 8, 9. [2] Deut. iv. 24. [3] John i. 3.
[4] *Ps. cxlvii.* 5. [5] 1 Cor. i. 30. [6] Matt. xvii. 27.
[7] *Rev. xii.* 4. Is. xiv. 13. [8] Rom. i. 21.

creature, but Truth itself, the Artificer of the creature, they do not seek piously, and therefore do not find; or if they do find Him, "knowing Him to be God, they glorify Him not as God, neither are thankful, but become vain in their imaginations, and say that they are wise,"[1] attributing to themselves what is Thine; and thereby, with most perverse blindness, strive to ascribe to Thee what is their own, thus heaping lies on Thee, Who art the Truth, and "changing the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things, changing Thy truth into a lie, and worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator.

Yet I remembered many true things which these men delivered to me concerning the creature, and I saw the reason of their calculations, the succession of times, and the visible corroborations of the stars; and I compared them with the sayings of Manichæus, which he in his madness had written at much length on these subjects; but I found no account, neither of the solstices, nor equinoxes, nor of the eclipses, nor of anything which I had learned in the books of secular philosophy. But these I was commanded to believe; and to believe what neither accorded with my calculations, nor with my observations, but was far different.

[1] Rom. i. 21.

CHAPTER IV.

The Knowledge of God alone gives Happiness.

DOES, then, O Lord God of truth, the knowledge of these things render a man pleasing in Thy Sight? Unhappy indeed is the man who knows all things, but knows not Thee; but blessed is the man who knows Thee, though he be ignorant of all these things. But he who knows both Thee and them, is not the more blessed for knowing them, but on account of Thee only is blessed, if, "knowing Thee, he glorifies Thee as God, and is thankful, and becomes not vain in his imaginations."[1] For as he is better off who knows how to possess a tree, and gives thanks for its use, though he knows not its height or breadth, than he who has accurate knowledge of its dimensions, and the number of its boughs, and yet does not own it, and neither knows nor loves its Creator; so a believer, to whom, as it were, the whole world of riches belongs, as "having nothing, and yet possessing all things,"[2] through cleaving to Thee, Whom all things serve, although he is unacquainted even with the circles of the constellation of the Great Bear, yet is he in a better state (it would be folly to doubt it) than one who can measure the heavens and number the stars, and weigh the elements, but is neglectful of Thee, "Who hast made all things in number, weight, and measure."[3]

[1] Rom. i. 21. [2] 2 Cor. vi. 10. [3] Wisd. xi. 20.

CHAPTER V.

The Ignorance of Manichæus concerning the Stars showed him to be untrustworthy in other Things

BUT yet who asked this Manichæus to write on these subjects, the knowledge of which is not essential to piety? For Thou hast said to man, "Behold, piety and wisdom;"[1] of which he might be in entire ignorance, though well versed in these other things; but these things he impudently ventured to teach without knowing them, a clear evidence of his lack of the knowledge of piety. For to make profession of worldly learning at all, even when we do possess it, is vanity; but to confess to Thee, is piety. Wherefore this man, wandering out of the way, spoke much upon these things, that being convicted by those who had mastered them, it might be clearly seen what he would be likely to know in more recondite subjects. For he wished not to be looked upon as of small importance, but endeavoured to persuade men "that the Holy Ghost, the Comforter and Enricher of Thy faithful ones, was personally present in him with plenary authority." Therefore, when he was discovered to have spoken erroneously concerning the heavens and the stars, concerning the motions of the sun and of the moon, although these things formed no part of religious teaching, yet his sacrilegious pretensions were evident enough; seeing that he spoke of things, not only which he knew not, but which were

[1] Job xxviii. 28.

falsified, with such an insane vanity of pride, as to strive to ascribe them to himself, as to a divine person.

For when I hear any Christian brother, whoever he may be, ignorant of these things and mistaken about them, I can bear to see such a man holding his opinion; nor do I see that his ignorance about the situation and order of the material creation is a hindrance to him, provided that he does not believe anything unworthy of Thee, O Lord, Creator of all. But it is injurious to him, if he regards his opinion as a part of his religion, and if he dares to affirm pertinaciously what he is ignorant of. And yet such an infirmity as this is borne by a sort of maternal charity, during the infancy of faith, until the new nature "grow up unto a perfect man,"[1] and can no longer "be carried about with every wind of doctrine." But in him, who dared in such wise to make himself the teacher, author, guide, and head of all whom he could persuade, so that those who followed him, thought that they followed, not merely a man, but Thy Holy Spirit; who would not judge that so great a madness would be abjured and utterly rejected, when he had once been convicted of falsehood? But I had not yet discovered, whether the changes of the longer and shorter days and nights, and of day and night itself, and the eclipses of the greater lights, and whatever else of the same nature I had read in other books, might not be explained in accordance with his calculations; so that, if they perchance could, I might have still been uncertain as to what really was the truth; moreover, I might have proposed to myself his authority, as a *motive for belief*, on account of his reputed sanctity.

[1] Eph. iv. 13, 14.

CHAPTER VI.

Faustus was eloquent, but ignorant of the Liberal Sciences.

FOR almost the whole of those nine years, in which with an unsettled mind I had listened to their teaching, I had been looking forward with a longing too intense for the coming of this Faustus. For the rest of them, with whom I had by chance fallen in, when they failed in answering my objections which I put to them, promised me that he, when he came and could converse with me, would with the greatest ease reply to them, and would most readily unravel, if I had them, greater difficulties. When then he came, I found him a man of pleasant and agreeable address, and one who could say all that they said but in a sweeter and more fluent manner. But what satisfaction to my thirst for something more precious did this most graceful cup-bearer offer? I was tired of hearing the same things again; neither did they seem better because they were better spoken, nor the more true because eloquently said; nor was the soul wise, because the face was comely, and the speech graceful. But those who promised him to me were no good judges of his qualifications; and therefore he appeared to them to be a man of wisdom and understanding, because of the charm of his eloquence. But I felt, however, that another kind of persons suspect even the truth itself, and will not give their assent to it, when it is expressed in elegant and *exuberant* language. But Thou hadst already taught

me, O my God, by wonderful and secret ways; and therefore I believe what Thou hast taught me, for it is true, nor is there any other teacher of truth besides Thee, whatever be the time or place in which it shines upon us. I had learned, then, from Thee, that neither ought a thing to be regarded as true because it is eloquently uttered, nor on the other hand false because awkwardly expressed; neither is it true because the diction is ungraceful, nor false because clothed in glowing language; but that truth and folly are like wholesome and hurtful food, and language ornate and bald like fine and plain dishes, and either kind of meat may be served in either kind of dish.

Therefore the eagerness with which I had so long expected the coming of that man, was gratified indeed by his action and animation when disputing, his choice of suitable words, the fluency of speech with which he delivered his ideas; and I was delighted—delighted even beyond many, and I sang his praises. But I was vexed, because, when in the midst of the crowds which listened to him, I was not allowed to address him and to ply him with those questions which bore upon my difficulties, so that I might hear and reply to what he had to say. When then I had the opportunity, and with my companions, began at an appropriate time, when he could discuss those matters with me, to engage his attention, I put certain questions to him about the points which troubled me; when I discovered him first to be ignorant of the liberal sciences, except grammar, and of that his knowledge was but of an ordinary kind. But because he had read some of Tully's orations, a very few books of Seneca, and some of the poets, and some few volumes of his own

sect, such as were written in Latin and in a proper manner, and had been in the habit of delivering speeches daily, therefore he had acquired a certain degree of eloquence, which was rendered the more pleasing and seductive because he kept it under the control of his good sense, and accompanied it with a certain natural gracefulness. Do I not rightly recall it, O Lord my God, Thou Judge of my conscience? In Thy Sight is my heart, and my memory—Thou Who didst then guide me by the secret mystery of Thy Providence, and didst bring my shameful ways before my face,[1] that I might see and hate them.

CHAPTER VII.

He abjures the Manichaean Sect.

FOR after that it was sufficiently manifest that he was ignorant of those arts in which I had expected him to excel, I began to despair of getting from him any light upon and solution of my perplexities; of which, indeed, he might have been ignorant and yet have held the truths of piety, had he not been a Manichæan. For their books are full of fables of very great length, about the heavens, the stars, the sun, and the moon; and I wanted him to decide, having compared the two together—namely, the accounts in the books of the Manichæans and the calculations I had found elsewhere—which of the two was the better, or whether one was as reliable as the other, and I no longer thought that it was in his power to answer the question in a definite manner. Which when I had

[1] Ps. l. 21.

proposed it to him for his consideration and discussion, he with modesty shrank from undertaking the task. For he was aware that he had not the requisite knowledge, and he was not ashamed to own it. For he was not one of those people of glib tongue from whom I had suffered so much, who attempted to explain these things, and yet never said a word to the point. But this man had a heart, though not right towards Thee, yet not unwary with regard to himself. For he was not entirely ignorant of his own ignorance, and did not therefore wish to be involved in a controversy, in which perhaps he would find no outlet, nor an easy retreat; and for that I even liked him the better. For more winning was the modesty of a mind which confesses its defect, than the knowledge which I went to seek; and this trait of his character presented itself whenever the more difficult and subtle questions were started.

My attachment to the writings of Manichæus being thus broken, and having no hope that their other teachers would be able to satisfy my doubts, when the one who was so celebrated among them had utterly failed me; I began to spend my time with him upon those studies on which he was much set, and which I, as master of rhetoric, was then teaching the youths at Carthage, and to read with him, either what he wished to hear, or what I thought would be congenial to his turn of mind. But all the efforts which I made to grow more deeply rooted in that sect, when I had become acquainted with that man, fell to the ground; not that I entirely separated myself from them, but as one who knew of nothing better to turn to, I determined to remain for the present contented where I

happened to be, unless by chance something more desirable dawned upon me. So, that Faustus, who had been to so many a snare of death, had now, neither willingly nor knowingly, began to unloose that which had held me captive. For Thy Hands, my God, in Thy mysterious Providence did not cease to guide my soul; and my mother, with tears shed night and day, offered the sacrifice of a bleeding heart to Thee on my behalf; for "Thou didst deal wondrously with me."[1] Thou didst this, O my God. For "the steps of a man are ordered by the Lord, and He shall dispose his way."[2] Or what chance of salvation is there, unless Thy Hand make anew what Thou hast made?

CHAPTER VIII.

He sets out for Rome, against his Mother's wish.

THOU didst then bring it to pass, that I should be persuaded to go to Rome, and to teach there rather what I was teaching at Carthage. And I will not omit to confess to Thee, in what way I was induced to go to Rome, because Thy most mysterious ways and Thy ever-present Mercy must be considered and proclaimed. I did not wish to go to Rome for the sake of the greater emolument, and the higher honours which my friends assured me would be the result of this change of place, though my mind was not callous to such attractions; but the chief and almost the only reason was, that I heard that young men could study there more quietly, and were kept in check by more regular discipline; so that the scholars of one school

[1] *Joel ii. 26.* [2] Ps. xxxvii. 23.

could not rush at random and impudently into that of another master, but were only admitted when they had previous permission. At Carthage, on the contrary, the licence which the students take is shameful and unbounded. They rush in insolently, and with such grimaces as almost befit madmen, and upset whatever order any one may have established for the good of his pupils. They commit injuries with a marvellous insensibility,—injuries which would bring them within the reach of the law, unless their custom had lent a sort of sanction to them; a custom which makes them the more miserable, in that they through it commit actions as if lawful, which by Thy Eternal Law will never be sanctioned; and they think that they can do these things with impunity, whereas the very blindness through which they act is itself a punishment; and they suffer themselves things incomparably worse than those they inflict on others. Such behaviour, then, as I was unwilling to imitate when a pupil, I was obliged to tolerate when a master; and therefore I was glad to go where, all who knew the place assured me, such conduct did not obtain. But Thou, "my Hope and my Portion in the land of the living,"[1] to make me change from one place to another for the salvation of my soul, didst eject me from Carthage, as it were by goads, and didst draw me to Rome by allurements, by means of men who loved this perishing life—here doing mad things, there promising vain things; and to direct aright my steps, Thou didst secretly use their and my perversity. For both those who disturbed my quiet were blinded by an abominable madness, and those who drew me to the other

[1] Ps. cxlii. 5.

place, savoured only of the earth. But I, who hated here what was genuine misery, sought there a fictitious happiness.

But why I went from this place to that, Thou knowest, O God; and yet Thou didst not disclose the reason either to me, or to my mother, who bewailed my departure grievously, and followed me to the sea-shore. But I deceived her, as she violently clung to me, desiring either to hold me back or to go with me; and I pretended that I had a friend whom I could not leave, until he was fairly under way. And I lied to my mother, and to such a mother as she was, and thus I got out of her grasp: for this also Thou hast mercifully forgiven me, preserving me from the waters of the sea, when I was so foully stained with sins, for the water of Thy Grace, in which having been cleansed, those rivers from my mother's eyes, with which she had daily watered the ground beneath her face, were dried up. And difficulty enough I had, as she protested she would not return without me, to induce her to stay that night in a place which was very near the ship, where was a memorial church of Saint Cyprian. That night I clandestinely departed, but her tears and her prayers followed me. And what with those tears was she then seeking from Thee, O Lord, but that Thou wouldest hinder my departure? But Thou, in the depth of Thy Wisdom, by then denying her prayer, didst grant that which was at the root of her desire, in order to make me what in every prayer she longed for me to be. The wind blew, and swelled our sails, and the shore receded from our view; and there in the morning she stood, in a frenzy of grief, and with complaints and groans, which Thou didst disregard,

filled Thy Ears; whilst by means of my desires, Thou wert hurrying me on to put an end to those very desires, and her too earthly love for me was being chastened by a just scourge of sorrow. For she loved to have me with her, after the manner of mothers, and much more than many mothers; but she knew not what joy Thou wouldst have in store for her through my absence. She knew not, therefore she wept and lamented, and by those throes there appeared in her what Eve had handed down, as with sorrow she sought what with sorrow she brought forth. And yet, after accusing me of deceit and cruelty, she soon turned to Thee and prayed again for me, and she returned to her usual ways, and I went to Rome.

CHAPTER IX.

Taken with a Fever, he became dangerously ill.

AND behold, there I was taken with a scourge of bodily illness, and was going down to hell, bearing all my sins with me,—sins against Thee, against myself, and against others,—many and grievous, besides the bond of original sin, by which we "all in Adam die."[1] For Thou hadst not yet forgiven me any of those things in Christ, nor had He "abolished by His Cross the enmities,"[2] which by my sins I had contracted with Thee. For how should a crucified phantasm abolish them, for such I thought Him to be? In proportion, then, as the death of His Flesh appeared to me to be false, so was the death of my soul real; and as the death of His Flesh was true, so the life of my

[1] *1 Cor. xv. 22.* [2] Eph. ii. 14.

soul was false, which doubted it. And now the fever was reaching its height, and I was "departing and sinking."[1] For had I then departed, whither should I have gone, but into fire and torments, such as my deeds deserved according to Thy true order. And this my mother knew nothing of, and yet she prayed for me when absent from me. But Thou art nowhere absent, and Thou heardest her where she was, and, where I was, hadst pity upon me; so that I recovered my bodily health, though my impious heart was not restored. For through all that danger I had no desire for Thy Baptism; and I was better as a boy, when I did seek it of my mother's piety, as I have already remembered and confessed. But I had grown worse to my shame, and had madly scorned the medicines which Thou didst prescribe, Who wouldst not suffer me to die a second death, being in such a state; for had I so died, my mother's heart would have broken, and her wound have been incurable. No words can express her love for me, and how much more grievous were the throes with which she laboured for the birth of my spirit, than her travail at the birth of my flesh![2]

I cannot see, then, how her grief should have been healed, had her loving heart been pierced by such a sorrow as my dying in a state of sin would have been. And what would have become of all those earnest and continual supplications, which without intermission she was ever presenting before Thee? But couldest Thou, O God of mercies, "despise the contrite and humble heart"[3] of that chaste and sober widow, full of alms-deeds, loyal and dutiful to Thy Saints, never omitting for a day the oblation at Thine Altar, twice a

[1] *Ps. lviii. 9.* [2] Gal. iv. 19. [3] Ps. li. 17.

were wiser than the rest; because they held that we should doubt about everything, and that the mind of man could not arrive at or comprehend any truth. For this I imagined was their opinion, as it was commonly reported, though I really had not grasped their meaning. Yet I did not shrink from openly repressing the excessive confidence which my host had in those fabulous statements, which fill the pages of the Manichæan books. Nevertheless I lived on more intimate terms of friendship with those who were members of this sect, than with others. And though the enthusiasm with which I at first espoused their doctrines was now extinct, still my personal acquaintance with them (for many found a lurking-place in Rome) made me less inclined to seek some other doctrine; especially as I entertained no hope of ever finding the truth, from which in Thy Church they had turned me aside, O Lord of heaven and earth, Maker of all things, visible and invisible; and it seemed to me a gross conception to believe Thee to have the form of human flesh, and to be circumscribed by the corporeal outline of our members. And since, when I wanted to think on my God, I thought only of a mass of bodies, for I could form no idea of anything without dimensions, this was the greatest and almost sole cause of my inevitable error.

Therefore I imagined evil to be also a kind of substance, having bulk, foul and deformed—whether it be solid which they call earth; or thin and fine, as the air, which they suppose to be an evil mind stalking through that earth. And because some degree of piety hindered me from believing that the good God had created an evil nature, I conceived that there

were two antagonistic substances, both limitless, but the evil narrower, the good greater. And from this pernicious principle the rest of my blasphemous notions followed. And when my mind tried to revert to the Catholic Faith, I was driven back, because I had a false idea of what the Catholic Faith was. And I thought it more pious to conceive of Thee, my God, Whose Mercies to me I now confess as infinite on all sides, except that on which the mass of evil opposed itself, at which point I was constrained to regard Thee as finite; than to hold the opinion, that Thou wert confined on all sides by the outline of a human form. And it seemed to me better to believe Thee to have created no evil—evil being in my estimation not only a substance but a corporeal substance, for of mind I had no other notion, than that it was a delicate substance which was expanded by Thee over a definite area—than to believe that evil, such as I understood it, came from Thee. And our Saviour Himself, Thy Only-begotten One, I imagined to have reached forth to save us out of the mass of Thy pellucid substance, so that of Him I might not believe anything, save that which in my vanity I could imagine. His Nature, then, being such, could not, I thought, be born of the Virgin Mary, unless it was mingled with flesh. But I could not see how that which I had so figured to myself could be mingled with flesh, and remain unpolluted. I feared therefore to believe Him born in the flesh, lest I should be obliged to regard Him as defiled by the flesh. Thy spiritual ones will now indeed blandly and lovingly smile at me, if they read these confessions of mine; yet however such was I then.

CHAPTER XI.

How Augustine conferred with the Catholics.

THEN I did not think that those parts of Scripture which these men criticised could be defended. But I had often the desire to confer with some one who was very learned in these books on the points in question, and to find out what he had to say about them. Already the words of a certain man, by name Helpidius, who had been speaking against and arguing face to face with these Manichæans, had begun to move me even when I was at Carthage; when he alleged many things out of the Scriptures which were not easily opposed, and their answer seemed to me to be very weak. And they were not inclined to answer publicly at all, but only to us in private; and their reply was to the effect that the Scriptures of the New Testament had been tampered with, by I know not whom, who wished to graft the Jewish law on the Christian faith; but they did not produce any copies which had not been thus corrupted. But what kept me down, and in a way suffocated me, was this idea of corporeal masses; by which I was so oppressed that I gasped for the clear and pure air of Thy Truth, but was unable to breathe it.

CHAPTER XII.

The Fraud of Students at Rome against their Tutors.

THEN I began diligently to occupy myself about that which brought me to Rome, namely, the teaching of the art of rhetoric; and first I assembled some pupils at my own house, to whom and through whom I began to be known; and lo, I discovered that there were practices at Rome which I had not encountered during my residence in Africa. For indeed I did not here witness any of those "subvertings" by abandoned youths: but many young men on a sudden, to avoid, said they, paying what was due to their master, agree together to abscond and remove to another tutor; such breakers of their word, through love of money, value money more than justice. These also "my heart hated," although not with a "perfect hatred."[1] For I have an idea that my hatred may have been stirred more by the possibility of suffering from them myself, than by the unlawfulness of their conduct. Certainly such are base persons, and "commit fornication against Thee," by loving the fleeting follies of time, and filthy lucre, which pollutes the hand of him who grasps it; and by embracing the world which is hastening away, and despising Thee Who abidest, and Who recallest and pardonest the adulteress soul which returns to Thee. And now I hate such depraved and crooked persons, though I love them to be amended, so that they may value

[1] Ps. cxxxix. 22.

learning more highly than money, and Thee above learning, O God, the Truth, and the Spring of all real good, and most chaste Peace. But then I had a greater dislike to endure those persons in their wickedness for my own sake, than I had wish to see them reformed for Thy sake.

CHAPTER XIII.

Intending to teach Rhetoric, he is sent to Milan; he is kindly received by Ambrose.

WHEN, then, an application had been made at Rome to the prefect of the city by the people of Milan, to provide for that place a professor of rhetoric, who was to be sent at the public expense, I myself entreated Symmachus, who was at that time prefect—through those very persons, intoxicated with Manichæan vanities, to be delivered from which I was going thither, though neither they nor I knew it—that he would subject my knowledge to some test, and then send me. And to Milan I came,—to Ambrose, the bishop, known to all the world as one of the best of men, and a devout servant of Thine; whose eloquence promptly supplied Thy people with the fat of Thy "wheat," and the gladness of Thy "oil," and the sober inebriation of Thy "wine."[1] To him I was unknowingly led by Thee, that by him I might be knowingly led to Thee. That man of God received me in a fatherly manner, and entertained me with a charity worthy of a bishop. And I began to love him, at first *indeed not as* a teacher of truth, which I had no hope

[1] Ps. iv. 7; civ. 15.

of finding in Thy Church, but as a person who was kind to myself. And I listened attentively to him when he was preaching to the people, not with the right disposition, but, as it were, to make trial of his eloquence, whether it equalled the description which had been given me, or was more or less than it was reported to be: and as to his words, on them I hung intently, whilst I was indifferent to and despised the matter; and his eloquence charmed me, which was more learned, yet in style less vivacious and insinuating, than that of Faustus. But as to the matter, there was no comparison: for the one wandered amid the deceptions of the Manichæans, the other taught most soundly the way of salvation; but "salvation is far from sinners"[1] such as I then stood before him, and yet I was drawing nearer gradually and unknowingly.

CHAPTER XIV.

Through hearing Ambrose, he is gradually recovered from his Errors.

FOR though I did not occupy myself in learning what he said, but only in hearing how he said it; (for that fruitless concern alone remained to me, a man who despaired of finding any way open to Thee,) yet, together with the words which delighted me, the things which I cared not for came also into my mind, for I was not indeed able to keep them apart. And whilst I opened my heart to admit the eloquence of his utterances, there gradually entered likewise a conviction of the truth of what he said. Now for the

[1] Ps. cxix. 155.

first time, these things began to appear defensible; and the Catholic Faith, on behalf of which I had thought nothing could be said in answer to the attacks of the Manichæans, was, I now judged, capable of being defended by something more than reckless assertion; especially after I had heard several passages in the Old Testament explained, and often in a mystical manner, which when I understood literally I was killed spiritually.[1] Therefore, when he had explained many places in those books, I began to blame myself for having despaired of finding an answer to the objections of those who hated and scoffed at the Law and the Prophets. I was not, however, convinced that the Catholic way was to be held by me because there were learned men who maintained it, and who had plenty to say, and that wisely too, in answer to objections, nor that what I was holding then should be renounced, because both sides were equally able to defend themselves. All that was clear to me then was, that the Catholic side was not vanquished, and as yet was not victorious.

I then began to bend my mind earnestly to the one task of convicting, if possible, by certain proofs, the Manichæans of falsehood. But could I once conceive of a spiritual substance, immediately their whole system would fall to the ground, and be cast out of my mind; but I could not do so. However, concerning this material world, and the whole of nature, which our senses can reach to, the more I considered and

[1] In dealing with the moral difficulties in the Old Testament, S. Augustine, when he could not commend the actions, still found *in them a mystical* or sacramental meaning, a "revelation by *action," which was* "profitable for doctrine."

compared things, the more I was convinced that very many of the philosophers had made better guesses about it. Then, after the manner of the Academics (as they are commonly represented), doubting of everything and wavering between all, I determined to leave the Manichæans; thinking it not right to remain in that sect whilst I was in doubt, and already preferred to it the teaching of some of the philosophers; to which philosophers, however, I altogether refused to commit the cure of my fainting soul, because they were without the saving Name of Christ. I determined, therefore, so long to be a catechumen in the Catholic Church, to which my parents had commended me, till something certain should shine upon me, to direct me in my course.

BOOK VI.

The arrival of his mother Monica; her pious obedience to S. Ambrose; Ambrose's habits and manner of life; Augustine's thirtieth year; he attends the sermons of Ambrose, and understands more clearly that Catholic doctrine had been falsely blamed by the Manichæans; yet he does not arrive at the nature and advantages of faith. The character of his friend Alypius. Augustine is drawn in different directions, whilst he deliberates on amending his life; he is struck with the fear of death and judgment, and is daily inflamed with the desire for conversion of life.

CHAPTER I.

Augustine neither a Manichaean nor a Catholic.

MY Hope from my youth, where wert Thou to me, and whither hadst Thou gone? Hadst Thou not indeed made me, and separated me from the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air? Thou hadst made me wiser, and "I walked through a dark"[1] and "slippery path,"[2] and I sought Thee abroad, out of myself, and found not the God of my heart; and I sunk in the deep waters, and doubted and despaired of ever finding truth. And now my mother had come to me, brave through piety, following me by land and by sea, and in all dangers committing herself to Thee. For in times of peril at sea she comforted even the sailors (who were rather *accustomed to* administer comfort to passengers

[1] *Is. l. 10.* [2] Ps. xxxv. 6.

unacquainted with the deep when they were terrified, than to receive it), promising them a safe arrival, because Thou in vision hadst promised this to her. And she found me in a perilous state, through despair of ever finding the truth. But when I told her that I was indeed no longer a Manichæan, nor yet a Catholic Christian, she expressed no sudden joy, as at some unexpected tidings; although her wish had been granted as to one part of my misery, for which she wept over me as one dead, but again to be raised by Thee, and "carried" me forth, as it were, upon "the bier" of her thoughts, that Thou mightest say to the widow's son, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise;" and he should revive and "begin to speak, and Thou shouldest deliver him to his mother."[1] Her heart then beat with no tumultuous joy, when she heard that so great a part of that which with tears she daily sought from Thee had come to pass; in that, though the truth I had not yet arrived at, I had at any rate been delivered from error; but now, being assured that what was still wanting Thou wouldst give, Who hadst promised all, she most calmly and with a heart full of confidence replied to me, that "she trusted in Christ to see me before she departed this life a faithful Catholic." So much she said to me; but to Thee, Fountain of mercies, she poured forth prayers and tears more copiously, that Thou wouldest hasten Thy assistance, and enlighten my darkness; and she ran more eagerly to the church, and hung upon the lips of Ambrose, "for the fountain of water which springs up unto eternal life."[2] For she loved that man "as an angel of God,"[3] because she knew that it was through his

[1] *Luke vii. 14, 15.* [2] John iv. 14. [3] Gal. iv. 14.

CHAPTER III.

Employments and Studies of Ambrose.

NOR did I yet groan in prayer that Thou mightest help me; but my mind was intent on going into questions, and eager to dispute. And Ambrose himself I counted a happy man, according to worldly notions, whom so many persons of rank honoured; only his single state of life seemed to me a hardship. But what hope he cherished, what struggles he had with the temptations of his very greatness, or what solace in adversity, or what joys he tasted with the hidden palate of his heart, ruminating upon Thy Bread, I neither could have known, nor had I experienced: neither did he know my restless state, nor the depth of my danger. For I could not seek at his hands what I wished as I wished, in consequence of the crowds of people, full of their own business, to whose infirmities he ministered, and who prevented me from drawing near enough to get within the sound of his voice. And when he was not engaged with them, which was but a short time, he was either occupied in refreshing the body by taking necessary food, or the mind by reading. But when he read, his eyes scanned the pages, and his heart penetrated into the meaning, but his voice and tongue were silent. Often when we were present, for no one was forbidden to enter, nor was it the custom to announce any one who came to him, we saw him thus reading silently, and never in any other way; and having remained for a long time in silence (for who would dare to interrupt any one so absorbed?), we

departed, and concluded, that for that short time which he caught for refreshing his mind, free from the noise of other men's matters, he was disinclined to be disturbed; and perhaps he avoided reading aloud, lest, when some one was listening and perplexed at some obscure passage which he came upon, he should have to pause to explain it, or should be obliged to enter into a discussion upon some points of difficulty, and so, losing time by this, would be unable to get through so much of the volumes as he wished: although this habit of reading to himself might have more justly arisen from a desire to save his voice, which was very easily weakened;—whatever might have been the reason, no doubt it was a good one in such a man.

But certainly I had no opportunity of consulting about the things I desired, that holy oracle of Thine, his breast, unless it might be done in a very brief manner. But these my perplexities needed one with much leisure, to whom they might be poured forth, which he was never found to have. And I heard him indeed every Lord's day amongst the people "rightly handling the word of truth;"[1] and more and more was I convinced that all the knots of sophistical calumnies, which those deceivers had fastened against the Divine Books could be undone. For when I came to know that man, being made by Thee in Thine own image, was not, by Thy spiritual sons whom by grace Thou hast born again of their Catholic mother, so understood, as though they believed and thought Thee to be Thyself contained within the form of a human body; although of the manner a spiritual substance could exist, I had not indeed the faintest

[1] 2 Tim. ii. 15.

notion; yet in my joy I had a feeling of shame at having so many years barked against, not the Catholic Faith, but the figments of my own carnal ideas. For so rash and wicked had I been, that the words which I should have employed in inquiring I had spent on condemning. But Thou, most High, and most near; most secret and most present; Who hast not limbs of different sizes, but art everywhere whole, and art no where localised; Thou art not a corporeal form like unto us, yet "hast Thou made man after Thine own image," and behold, he is from head to foot confined to place.

CHAPTER IV.

He understands the Doctrine of the Church through the Preaching of Ambrose.

WHEN, then, I did not understand how this Thy image could exist, I should have knocked and inquired in what sense this was to be believed; not insultingly opposed what I imagined was believed. Therefore the more sharply now my heart was gnawed with anxious doubt as to what was really believed, so much the more ashamed was I that, so long deluded and deceived with the promise of certainties, I had with puerile error and forwardness prated about so many uncertainties as if they were certainties; for that they were false became clear to me afterwards. I was, however, certain that they were uncertain, and that I had formerly believed them to be certain, when *with blind* contentiousness I accused Thy Catholic *Church, whom,* although I had not yet discovered her

to be the teacher of truth, yet I found out not to teach that with which I had so gravely charged her. Thus I was confounded, and I was converted; and I rejoiced, O my God, that the One Church, the Body of Thy Only Son, in which the Name of Christ had been put upon me as a child, had no relish for childish conceits; and that the idea that Thou, the Creator of all, wert confined within a certain space, however great and vast, yet bounded on all sides by the figure of a human body, in her sound doctrine had no place.

I rejoiced also that the old Scriptures of the Law and the Prophets were not now proposed to me to be read in that light, in which they had before seemed to me to be absurd, when I reviled Thy Saints for thinking what they never did think; and I joyfully listened to Ambrose in his sermons to the people, oftentimes most diligently recommending as a rule the text, "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life;"[1] whilst, having drawn aside the mystic veil, he spiritually explained those passages in which the literal sense seemed to teach something unsound, treating them in such a way as to give me no offence, though I knew not whether the things he said were true. For I kept my heart from assenting to anything, fearing a precipice; but this suspense was the worse death of the two. For I wanted to gain the same sort of certainty concerning the things which I saw not, as that which assured me that seven and three were ten. For I was not so mad as to suppose this was doubtful, but I desired to have other things as clear as this—whether things corporeal which were

[1] 2 Cor. iii. 6.

not present to the senses, or spiritual, of which I knew not how to think except under material images. And by believing I might have been cured, that so the eyesight of my mind being cleared, might in some way have been directed to Thy truth, which ever abides and never faileth. But as it happens that one who has tried a bad physician, is afterwards afraid to trust himself to a good one, so was it with the sickness of my soul, which could only be cured by believing, and refused to be healed, lest it should be again deceived; resisting Thy Hands, Who hast prepared the medicines of faith, and hast sprinkled them upon the diseases of the whole world, and imparted to them so great authority.

CHAPTER V.

Of the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, and their necessary use.

ON this ground, however, I was also led to prefer the Catholic doctrine, in that I thought it more modest and straightforward to enjoin belief in things which were not demonstrated (whether the things were incapable of demonstration in themselves, or whether they were so only to certain persons), than to impose on credulity by rash promises of proof; seeing that so many most fabulous and absurd things, because they were incapable of demonstration, had been taught as articles of faith. After that, gradually didst Thou, O Lord, with a most gentle and merciful hand, touching and disposing my heart, persuade me, by leading me *to consider* what numberless things I believed which *I did not see*, things which were done when I was not

present; as, for instance, so many events in the history of nations, so many accounts of places and of cities which I had never seen, so many statements of friends, so many of physicians, so many of these people or those people, which unless they were believed the business of life could not be conducted; lastly, how firmly I believed that I was born of certain parents, a fact which I could not have known but by believing what was told me,—thus Thou didst persuade me that not those who believed Thy Books—Books which Thou hast established with so great authority in almost all nations—but those who disbelieved them, were to be blamed; nor were those to be listened to who might say to me, "How do you know that those Books were delivered to mankind by the Spirit of the one true and most truthful God?" For this was the thing which seemed to me most credible, since no contentions of questions and cavils, such as abounded in the books of the self-contradicting philosophers, could ever shake my faith in Thy Existence, though I knew not the nature of Thy Being, and of Thy Providence over human affairs.

Sometimes this belief was very firm in me, at others more feeble; yet I always believed in Thy Existence, and Thy Providence; although I knew not what to think of Thy Substance, nor what way led to, or led back to, Thee. Since, then, we were too weak to find out truth by the light of reason, and therefore needed the authority of the Holy Writ, I now began to believe that Thou wouldest in no way have given such a high authority to the Scripture throughout all lands, if Thou hadst not wished, that through it we should believe in Thee, and through it seek Thee. For what

had seemed to me absurdities in the Scriptures, and used to offend me, now having been for the most part satisfactorily explained, I attributed to the depth of its mysteries; and its authority appeared to me the more venerable and worthy of religious acceptance, in that, while it was easily read by all, yet it reserved in a deeper meaning its secret greatness; offering itself to all in most plain words and in lowliest style, yet demanding the closest study of those who have the power of applying themselves; that it might receive all in its open bosom,[1] and through its narrow chinks transmit a few to Thee—a few, yet many more than if it stood not on such a height of authority, nor drew multitudes within the folds of its holy lowliness. I thought thus, and Thou wert present with me; I sighed after Thee, and Thou heardest me; I was tossed upon the waves, and Thou didst steer my course; I travelled through the broad way of the world, and Thou didst not desert me.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the Misery of the Ambitious, brought to his Mind by the sight of a poor blithesome Beggar.

I PANTED after honours, gain, marriage; and Thou didst mock me. I suffered through those desires most bitter trials, Thou being the more merciful to me, in not allowing anything to grow sweet unto me which was not Thyself. Behold my heart, O Lord, Who desirest that I should remember and acknowledge

[1] *Holy Scripture* has been likened to a river, with depths in *which elephants may* swim, and shallows where lambs may ford.

this to Thee. Now let my soul cleave to Thee, rescued like a bird by Thee from the clingy snares of death. How wretched was it! and Thou didst prick the sensitive part of my wound, so that—forsaking all, I might turn to Thee, Who art above all, and without Whom all things would be nothing—I might be converted and healed. How wretched then was it, and how didst Thou deal with me that I should have a sense of my wretchedness on that day, when I was preparing to recite a panegyric of the Emperor, in which I was to utter many lies, and lying, to be applauded by those who knew they were lies, and my heart panted with anxiety and was heated by a fever of consuming thought. For, passing through one of the streets of Milan, I observed a poor beggar, having just had, I suppose, a good meal, joking and light-hearted, and I fetched a deep sigh, and remarked to those friends who were with me, how many sorrows were the creations of our own follies; for in all such efforts as I then was making I was dragging behind me a load of unhappiness, lashed onwards by my eager desires, and making it heavier by dragging it, seeking after all only to secure that joy in which the poor beggar had forestalled me, and which perhaps I might never arrive at! For what he had obtained by means of the few pence for which he had begged, the same was I toiling to get by many a winding and circuitous path—the joy of a passing pleasure. His joy was not a true joy; yet it was much more true than the one I in my ambition was seeking. And certainly he was joyous, and I was anxious; he had no care, and I was trembling. And if any one should ask me, which I preferred, to rejoice or to be fearful, I should answer,

to rejoice. If any one should further ask me, which I would rather be, myself or the beggar, I should reply, myself, notwithstanding all my anxieties and fears, but perversely, for how could I truly make such a choice? Neither ought I, because I was more learned, prefer myself to him, seeing I derived no happiness from my learning, and only sought thereby to please men—only to please, mind you, not to instruct. And therefore "Thou didst break my bones" with the rod of Thy discipline.

Let them depart from my soul who thus speak, "There is a difference in joys as to their source." "That beggar's joy came from drinking, you desire yours to come from glory." But what glory, O Lord? that which is not in Thee. For as his joy was not true, so neither was my glory; and it turned my head even more. For his drunkenness he would dissipate with a night's rest, but I had slept and risen again and again, night after night, and morning after morning, and mine remained, how many days Thou knowest. But that "joys differ according to the source from whence they spring," I admit, and that the joy of a true hope is incomparably beyond that of vanity. And there was a difference also between his joy and mine then. For he was indeed the happier man, not only because he was full of merriment, whilst the very life seemed taken out of me by cares; but he by wishing a blessing upon others had gained the wine, whilst I by telling lies was hunting after vanity. I said much to the same effect to my friends, and I often observed amongst them how it fared with me; and I found it *fared badly,* and I fretted, and therefore made my *burden* double. And if prosperity for a moment

smiled upon me, I was loth to take notice of it, for almost before I could lay hold of it, it had taken wing.

CHAPTER VII.

He reclaims Alypius from his Passion for the Circensian Games.

WE, who were living on familiar terms together, thus imparted our griefs to one another, but I chiefly and most openly conferred on these matters with Alypius and Nebridius; one of whom, Alypius, was a native of the same town with myself, his parents being persons of the very first rank in the place, and was younger than I. For he had studied under me, when I began to teach in our own town, and afterwards at Carthage; and he had a great regard for me, because he thought me good to him and learned; and I had the same for him, because of his capacity for moral greatness, which at no great age was clearly manifest. Nevertheless the whirlpool of the habits of the Carthaginians, who had a feverish love for idle spectacles, had sucked him into the wild follies of the circus: but while he was miserably carried round as it were by the stream, and I was teaching rhetoric there, and helping a public school, he would not as yet become one of my pupils, because of some dissension which had arisen between his father and me. I had found out that he had a pernicious love for the Circus, and it grieved me bitterly to think how he was throwing away, or had thrown away, all that seemed so promising in him. But I had no means of *advising him,* or by a sort of restraint reclaiming him,

either by kindness in the capacity of a friend, or by authority as a master. For I thought he felt towards me as his father did; but he did not. Therefore, disregarding his father's mind in that matter, he began to greet me, coming into my lecture-room, listening for a while, and then departing.

But still it slipped out of mind to give him the advice, which might deter him from ruining so good a disposition, by a blind and headlong attachment to vain sports. But Thou, O Lord, Who by Thy Providence directest all things which Thou hast created, hadst not forgotten him, who was one day to become one of Thy children, and a celebrant of Thy Sacrament; and that his amendment might be evidently attributed to Thyself, Thou didst make me the unconscious instrument of Thy work. For on a certain day, whilst I was sitting in my usual place, and my scholars were before me, he came in, greeted me, and took his seat, and applied his mind to the subject which I was treating. It happened that I had in hand a passage which, whilst I was expounding it, seemed to me to supply an apt allusion to the games in the Circus, of which I availed myself as likely to make my subject more palatable and clear, but not without biting derision of those who were captivated by that madness; Thou knowest, O my God, that I had no thought of curing Alypius of that infectious malady. But he took the whole of it to himself, and imagined that I had spoken every word of it for his sake. And whereas another would for this cause have taken offence at me, that worthy youth took offence at himself, and conceived a greater love for me. For Thou hadst said of old, and inserted it in Thy Book, "Rebuke a wise man,

and he will love thee."[1] But I had not rebuked him, but Thou, Who, using all, whether conscious or unconscious, according to Thy appointment (and that appointment is just), didst make my heart and tongue produce burning coals, whereby to inflame his languishing mind with a good hope, and to heal it. Let him be silent in Thy praises who regards not Thy Mercies, which from my inmost heart confess unto Thee. For he, upon those words, sprung forth from the deep pit into which he had so wilfully plunged, and had been blinded with its wretched pleasures; and he discarded them from his thoughts by a noble effort of self-control, shaking off as it were from his soul all the mire of the Circus, with which he was never again contaminated. Then he prevailed upon his father reluctantly to allow him to become one of my pupils, and in this he gained his point, and his father gave way. And Alypius beginning again to attend my lectures, was involved with me in the Manichæan superstition, admiring their show of continency, and supposing it to be true and genuine. But it was foolish and deceptive, beguiling precious souls, unable as yet to attain to solid virtue, yet readily carried away by the mere appearance of that which was after all but shadowy and counterfeit.

[1] Prov. ix. 8.

CHAPTER VIII.

Alypius is caught with a Passion for the Gladiatorial Games, which before he abhorred.

NOT, however, forsaking the course of life which had been depicted to him by his parents in glowing colours, he had gone before me to Rome to study law, and there he was incredibly smitten with an incredible passion for the shows of the gladiators. At a time when he preserved a hatred and detestation for such scenes, certain friends and comrades met him as they came from dinner, and with a familiar violence forced him, vehemently refusing and much against his will, into the Amphitheatre, whilst those cruel and deadly sports were going on. "If you drag," said he, "my body into this place, and there place me, can you force my soul and my eyes to look at these spectacles? I shall therefore be absent though present, and so overcome both you and them." They, however, nothing daunted, led him on, and were desirous of giving him the opportunity of putting to the test what he said. When they had arrived, and had taken their places where they could, the whole place boiled with excitement at those most savage sports. There he sat with his eyes shut, determined that through those doorways his mind should not roam forth into the midst of such evils; and would that he had shut his ears also! For when one of the combatants fell, a great shout which arose from the whole assemblage powerfully arrested his attention, and overcame him by curiosity, and as if ready to

despise and set aside at once whatever it was, he opened his eyes, and thereupon his soul received a deeper wound than that which had been inflicted on the body of him whom he desired to behold; and he fell more miserably than the prostrate gladiator, on whose account that shout was raised which had penetrated his ears and unsealed his eyes; that thereby the soul which was rash rather than courageous might be stricken and laid low, and be the weaker for presuming on itself, when its trust should have been in Thee. For when he saw that blood, he at once imbibed a savage spirit, and did not turn away his head, but remained with fixed eyes, drinking in unconsciously violent passions, and charmed with the wicked conflict, became intoxicated with the bloody spectacle. And he was no longer the man who had joined the assembly, but one of those he had joined, and a true companion of those who had brought him to the place. What more shall I say? He gazed, he shouted, he grew hot, he carried away with him such an infatuation as should goad him to return, not only with the same companions, but even before they arrived, yes, and to entice others also. And yet from this condition didst Thou with Thy Hand, most powerful and most merciful, rescue him, and didst teach him not to trust in himself but in Thee; but this was long afterwards.

CHAPTER IX.

Alypius is apprehended as a Thief.

BUT the remembrance of all this would remain, and *serve for* a medicine hereafter. And another

incident would do the same, which occurred at the time when he was a student of mine at Carthage, for whilst he was thinking over (as was the custom of scholars) what he had to recite, in the market-place and at noonday, Thou permittest him to be taken in charge by the officers of the market as a thief. I believe that Thou didst permit this, O my God, for no other cause than that this man, who was to become so great, should begin to learn what caution was necessary in judging causes, lest man should be with rash credulity condemned by man. For he was strolling up and down alone before the Tribunal, with tablets and a pen in his hand, when, lo, one of the students, a young man, the real thief, secretly brought a hatchet, and got in, unobserved by him, to the leaden railings which are over the silversmiths' row, and began to hack away the lead. But the sound of the blows being heard, the silversmiths who were underneath began to make a stir, and sent to apprehend whomsoever they should find. But the thief hearing their voices threw down the axe, and made off, fearing lest he should be caught with it. Alypius, who did not see him come, saw him go, and that too as fast as he could; and desiring to know the matter, he entered the place, where finding the hatchet, he stood regarding it and wondering,—when, lo, those who were sent found him with the axe, which had caused the noises which had startled them, in his hand: they laid hold of him; they dragged him before a concourse of the inhabitants of the market-place; they boasted that they had taken a manifest thief, and accordingly led him away to be brought before the judge.

But up to this point Alypius was being taught a

lesson. For Thou, O Lord, Who alone knew what had really happened, now camest to vindicate his innocency. For, when he was on his way either to prison or to punishment, they were met by a certain architect, who had the chief care of the public buildings. They were rejoiced to meet him, as he had often suspected them of stealing goods which had been missed from the market-place, and now they thought they could show him at last who was the real offender. But this man had often met Alypius at the house of one of the senators, whom he used to visit; and immediately recognising him, took him aside from the crowd, and asking how he came to be in such a lamentable position, heard the whole matter, and desired all present, amid much confusion and vociferous threatenings, to go with him. So they came to the house of the young man who had done the deed. Now there was a boy before the door, so small that, without suspecting any harm to his master, whom he had attended in the market-place, he would at once disclose the whole story. Alypius, as soon as he recognised him, told the architect; and showing the axe to the boy, he asked him whose it was, and he immediately replied, "Ours," and on being further questioned he disclosed everything. Thus the crime devolved upon another, and the rabble, which had begun to triumph over Alypius, was confounded; and the future dispenser of Thy Word, and examiner of frequent causes in Thy Church, departed, having acquired from this incident more experience and knowledge.

CHAPTER X.

Concerning the Integrity of Alypius, and the Arrival of Nebridius.

ALYPIUS, then, I found at Rome, and he stuck to me with a most strong attachment, and rather than leave me he accompanied me to Milan, having in view also the commencement of his legal practice, more because it was his parents' wish than his own. He had now thrice filled the office of Assessor there, with an integrity which surprised others, whilst he himself was the more surprised that they should prefer gold to integrity. His character also was tested, not only by the enticement of covetousness, but also by the goad of fear. At Rome he sat as Assessor to the Count of the Italian Exchequer. There was at that time a certain powerful senator, to whose favours many were indebted, by whose terrors many were restrained; he would, according to his custom, have a thing granted him, by I know not what stretch of power, though it was against the laws. This Alypius withstood; a bribe was offered, and he scorned it courageously, threats were then resorted to, and he trampled them under his feet: all were amazed at so unwonted a spirit, which neither courted the friendship, nor feared the enmity, of one so celebrated and renowned for the varied means which were in his power of benefiting or injuring another. For even the judge, whose councillor Alypius was, although he also was against it, yet did not venture openly to refuse, but putting it all on the shoulders of Alypius, alleged that he was

not allowed by him to do it; for indeed, had he done so, Alypius would have left the bench. There was one snare, however, in a literary matter, into which he wellnigh fell, namely, the temptation to have books copied at Prætorian rates; but consulting the dictates of justice he came to a better mind, esteeming rather the equity which forbade him to avail himself of this advantage than the power of having the privilege in question. This may seem a trifle, but "he that is faithful in that which is little, is faithful also in much."[1] Neither can those words which proceeded out of the mouth of Thy Truth be void—"If ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will trust you with that which is true? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?" Such, then, was this Alypius, who then became intimately united with me, and with me fluctuated in opinion as to the course of life which should be pursued.

Nebridius also, who had left his native place, which was in the neighbourhood of Carthage, and Carthage itself, for he was often there for long periods, and had left besides a beautiful family estate and mansion, and a mother too who was not likely to follow him, had come to Milan, for no other purpose than to live with me in the most ardent pursuit after truth and wisdom. We were one in our sighs, and one in our perplexities, ardently searching after the true life of happiness, and most acutely examining the most difficult problems. And so there were three hungry mouths, breathing out to one another their wants, and "waiting upon Thee, that Thou mightest give them

[1] Luke xvi. 10-12.

their meat in due season."[1] And in all the bitterness, which through Thy Mercy followed upon our worldly projects, as we considered to what end we suffered these things, there was nothing before us but darkness; and we turned away with a sigh, exclaiming, "How long will it be thus?" And this we often said; and yet saying so we did not quit them, for as yet nothing certain had dawned upon us which we might grasp, when the others had been forsaken.

CHAPTER XI.

Augustine, in an anxious State of Mind, deliberates as to his future Course of Life.

AND I wondered exceedingly, as I looked back and reflected how long a time it was since my nineteenth year, when I first began to be inflamed with the desire for wisdom, intending, when I had found her, to abandon the empty hopes and lying follies of vain desires. And lo, now I was in my thirtieth year, and still just where I was, sticking in the mire, greedy of enjoying present things which slip away and lay waste my soul, whilst I say to myself, "To-morrow I shall find it out; behold, it will appear quite clear to me, and I shall grasp it;" lo, Faustus will come and explain all. O great men of the Academy! nothing, then, can be known as a certainty to guide our life. Nay, but let us seek with greater diligence, and not despair. Behold, the things in the ecclesiastical books are not, as they were wont to appear, absurd, but may *be understood* in another and a reasonable way. I will

[1] Ps. cxlv. 15.

plant my feet in the same steps in which as a boy my parents placed me, until the clear truth be found out. But where shall it be sought? when shall it be sought? Ambrose has no leisure, we have no leisure to read. Where shall we find the books? whence or when procure them? From whom buy them? Let times be arranged, let certain hours be set apart for the health of the soul. A great hope has sprung up: the Catholic Faith does not teach what we supposed, and vainly accused it of. Those who are well instructed count it a crime to believe that God is limited by the outline of a human body, and why do we hesitate to "knock," that the rest also may be opened? The forenoon is taken up with my scholars; but how do we employ the remaining hours? Why not with this? But when, then, can we pay our respects to great friends, upon whose favour we much depend? when shall we prepare what we sell to scholars? when shall we refresh ourselves by relaxing the mental strain of all these cares?

"Let all things perish, and let these vanities and emptinesses be dismissed: let us set about inquiring after truth! Life is miserable, death uncertain. If it suddenly steal over us, how shall we go hence? and where shall we learn what we have here neglected? or will not rather the penalties of this negligence have to be paid? What if death put an end to all care and cut off all consciousness? This also must be examined. But God forbid that it should be so! It is not vain, it is no empty thing that the height of the authority of the Christian Faith shines out over the whole world. Never would such and so great things have been done for us by God, if together with the death of the body

the life of the soul ceased. Why then do we delay to set aside the hope of this world, and to give ourselves wholly to seek God and the life of blessedness? But wait: those things even are sweet; they have no small sweetness of their own. The intention to separate from them must not be too hastily made, for it would be a shame to return to them again. Behold now what great matter is it to obtain some honourable post? and then what more is there for us to desire? We have a plentiful supply of powerful friends; if nothing else be offered, and we are in great haste, at least a presidentship may be given us; and a wife with some fortune, that she may not burden us with expenses; and here my desires shall come to an end. Many great men, and most worthy of imitation, have embraced the married state, and yet have given themselves to the pursuit of wisdom."

Whilst I recounted these things, and these winds shifted and drove my heart then this way, and then that, the time rolled on, and I delayed to turn to the Lord; and I put off living to Him from day to day, and I did not put off daily dying in myself. Loving a happy life, I feared to seek it in its own abode, and sought it by running from it. And I thought that I should be too wretched, unless enfolded by conjugal affection; and I thought not of the medicine of Thy Mercy to heal the same infirmity, because I had not tried it; and I supposed continency to be in our own strength, and I know I had not that strength, being so foolish as not to know what was written, "that no one can be continent, except Thou give it."[1] And indeed *Thou* wouldst have given it, had I but with an inward

[1] Wisd. viii. 2, V.

groaning knocked at Thine Ears, and with a solid faith cast my care upon Thee.

CHAPTER XII.

Discussion between Alypius and Augustine concerning Matrimony and Celibacy.

ALYPIUS indeed hindered me from marrying, dinning into my ears that, if I did so, we could by no possibility have leisure time to live together in the love of wisdom, as we had long desired. He was himself in this respect most chaste, even so as to be wondered at; for in his early life he had tasted sinful pleasures, but without cleaving to them; rather had he grieved over and despised them, and lived ever after most continently. But I opposed him with the examples of those who after marriage made wisdom their pursuit, and pleased God, and who kept faithfully their friends and loved them. Of whose greatness of spirit I felt indeed far short, and captivated by the disease of the flesh with its deadly pleasure, I dragged my chain after me, fearing to be loosed; and as if a sore place had been struck, rejected the words of him who gave me good advice as the hand of one who would unchain me. Moreover, through me the serpent spoke to Alypius himself, and making use of my tongue, wove and spread secret snares in his path, to entangle his virtuous feet and take away their liberty.

For, when he wondered that I, for whom he entertained no small esteem, should stick so fast in the birdlime of that pleasure as to affirm, as often as we discussed the matter together, that I could not possibly

lead a single life; and I defended myself, when I saw him wondering, by pointing out that there was a vast difference between those short and stolen experiences which he with difficulty now remembered, and therefore without much effort could afford to despise, and my habitual pleasures, to which, if but the honourable name of marriage were added, he ought not to wonder why I was unable to despise that mode of life; then he too began to desire the marriage state, not in the least overcome by any desire for self-indulgence, but from curiosity. For he wanted to know, he said, what that could be without which my life, which to him was such a delight, seemed to me no life, but only pain. For his mind, free from that chain, was amazed at my slavery, and through that amazement was going on to a desire for an experience of it, then to the actual trial, and from that, perhaps, to fall into the very slavery at which he was wondering, since he willed to "make a covenant with death;"[1] and "he that loves danger shall fall into it."[2] For whatever honour there be in ordering the marriage state aright, and in bringing up children, had no attraction for either of us, or but very little. But I, for my part, was held in bondage by the habit of satisfying an insatiable passion, which vehemently tormented me: he, however, was only drawn on into captivity by his wonder at me. Such were we, until Thou, O Most High, not forsaking our clay, hadst mercy on the miserable, and didst help us in wonderful and mysterious ways.

[1] Isa. xxviii. 15. [2] Ecclus. iii. 26.

CHAPTER XIII.

A Wife is sought for Augustine.

AND I was continually urged to take a wife. I now became a suitor, and received a promise, my mother using her utmost endeavours to get me married, that I might receive the saving washing of Baptism; for which she rejoiced that I was becoming daily more fit, and in my faith she saw the fulfilment of her vows and of Thy promises. Yet when at my request and her own longing, with strong cries of heart she sought from Thee daily a vision which should reveal to her something concerning my future marriage, Thou wouldst never grant it. She saw some vain and imaginary appearances, such as the human spirit, vehemently bent upon a thing, could produce; and she related them to me, not with that confidence in them which she always had, when Thou hadst revealed anything to her, but making light of them. For she said she could distinguish, by a certain indescribable sweetness, between Thy revelations and the dreams of her own mind. The matter, however, was urged forward, and a maid, two years under the marriageable age, was sued; and as I liked her, I was willing to wait for her.

CHAPTER XIV.

He deliberates upon the Plan of Living with his Friends, in a Common Household.

AND many of us friends, who detested the din and turmoil of human life, had turned over in our minds and discussed together, and had almost come to a conclusion upon living apart from the world and its bustle; and this quiet was to be obtained by each one bringing in what he had and putting it into a common fund, and thus all would have one purse; so that their friendship should be so sincere, as that no one should say that this or that was his own, but the whole, which was made by all into one stock, should belong to each, and all to all. There seemed to be about ten men who were ready to form this society; and some of them were men of considerable property,—one especially, our fellow-townsman, Romanianus, who had been from boyhood an intimate friend of mine, who had been brought to the Court at that time by grave perplexities in which his own affairs were involved; he was most bent upon this project, and his advice upon the matter had great weight, in consequence of his possessing much more property than the rest. And we had arranged that two of us yearly should as it were hold office, and provide necessaries for the household, the rest having no care. But when we began to consider whether our wives would like the arrangement—for we, some of us, were married, and others hoped to be—the whole plan, which we were so well forming, fell to pieces in our hands, and was

dashed to the ground and given up. Then we sighed and groaned, and turned our steps to "the broad and beaten ways"[1] of the world, since many thoughts were in our heart; "but Thy counsel abideth for ever"[2] Out of that Thy counsel Thou didst laugh at ours, and didst make way for Thy own, intending to give us "food in due season,"[3] and "to open Thy Hand and to fill" our souls "with blessing."

CHAPTER XV.

One Mistress departs, and another takes her place.

IN the meanwhile my sins were being multiplied, and the one with whom I had been in the habit of living was torn from my side as an obstacle to my marriage, and my heart, which clung to her, by that wrench was wounded and bleeding. And she returned to Africa, vowing to Thee that she would never live with another, leaving with me a natural son by her. But I, unhappy, unable to imitate even a woman, impatient of delay—for two years had to pass before I could be married to her to whom I was engaged—not that I was a lover of wedlock, but I was a slave of passion, procured another, though no wife; so as to keep up and carry on the disease of my soul, unabated or aggravated, by the escort of a lasting habit into the realm of matrimony. Nor was that wound of mine healed which had been made by the cutting off of the earlier love, but after inflammation and most acute pain, it mortified, and the pain became benumbed, and therefore the more desperate.

[1] *Matt. vii. 13.* [2] Ps. xxxiii. 11. [3] Ps. cxlv. 15, 16.

CHAPTER XVI.

He never could dismiss entirely the Fear of Death and Judgment.

PRAISE be to Thee, glory be to Thee, Thou Fountain of mercies. I was becoming more miserable, and Thou nearer. Now, even now, was Thy Right Hand ready to draw me out of the mire, and to wash me clean, and I knew it not. And nothing recalled me from a deeper abyss of carnal pleasures, except the fear of death and of Thy future judgment, which through all the changes of my opinions never indeed departed from my breast. And often had I told my friends Alypius and Nebridius, in disputes about the ends of good and evil, that the teaching of Epicurus would commend itself to me, had I not believed that the soul existed after death, and received its deserts, which Epicurus would not believe.[1] And I asked, "Were we immortal, and to live in continual bodily pleasure, without any fear of losing it, why should we not be happy, or what else should we seek?" not knowing that this was my very misery, that I had sunk so deep and was so blind, that I could not discern the light of virtue and of that beauty which is to be embraced for its own sake, which the fleshly eye cannot see, but which is discerned from within. Nor did I, miserable, consider from what spring within me

[1] Epicurus held the soul to be material, and at death to be resolved into its original atoms, and thus to cease to exist. "All *good," said he,* "and evil consist in feeling, and what is death *but the privation of feeling?*"

that pleasure flowed which I experienced in conversing with my friends upon these subjects, foul as they were; neither could I, even with the notions I had then, be happy without friends, amid whatever abundance of carnal enjoyments. The friends, indeed, whom I loved for themselves only; I felt loved me for myself only, in return.

O crooked ways! Woe to the presumptuous soul which hoped, by forsaking Thee, to find something better! such a soul turned and turned again, on back, on sides, and on face and hands, and found all hard, and Thou alone its rest. And lo, Thou art near at hand, and deliverest us from our miserable wanderings, and placest us in Thy way, and consolest us, saying, "Run; I will carry you; and I will bring you to the end, and there also will I carry you."

BOOK VII.

Augustine brings back to his mind his entrance into man's estate, his thirty-first year. He relates how much he was struck by an argument of Nebridius, though yet enveloped in thick darkness as to the nature of God, Whom he conceived to be corporeal: he perceives that the Manichæans have impious ideas, but is unable as yet to accept the doctrine of the Church; he is recovered from the errors of astrologers, yet miserably perplexed about the origin of evil; he derives much profit from the books of the Platonists, but they are insufficient to give him true notions about the Incarnation of Christ; but by the study of the Holy Scriptures, and especially of S. Paul, his doubts are put to an end

CHAPTER I.

He conceives of God, under the form of a Body, spread throughout all Space.

THAT wicked and abominable youth of mine was now dead and gone, and I was entering on man's estate; the older I grew, the more base did I become through vanity, I who could not conceive of any substance which was not to be seen by my bodily eyes: I did not think of Thee, my God, under the form of a human body; from the time when I began to gain a little wisdom, I always had avoided this, and I was rejoiced to find that in the rejection of such a notion the faith of our spiritual mother, Thy Catholic Church, was with me. But it did not occur to me, *how to think of* Thee in any other way. And I, a *man, and such* a man, tried to picture Thee, the

Sovereign, Sole, and True God! and with my inmost heart I believed Thee to be Incorruptible, Inviolable, and Immutable; because, though I knew not whence or how, I plainly saw and felt certain, that that which could be corrupted was inferior to that which could not be corrupted; and that which could be injured I always set aside for that which could not; and that which suffered no change was better than that which was changeable. My heart cried out violently against all my phantasms, and with this one blow I strove to beat off from the eye of my mind the crowd of uncleanness which flew against it. And scarcely had I removed it, when, in the twinkling of an eye, it gathered again thick about me, rushed into my eyes and blinded them; so that, though not under the form of a human body, yet I was forced to think of Thee as something corporeal, occupying space—whether infused into the world, or diffused through infinite space beyond it—though I did prefer the incorruptible, the inviolable, and the immutable to that which is corruptible, vulnerable, and changeable. For whatsoever I deprived of all dimensions seemed to me thereby to become nothing and to cease to exist at all, and not even to be a void, such as would exist if a body were taken out of a place, and the place itself could remain entirely unoccupied, whether by any earthly, watery, airy, or heavenly substance, and continue to be an empty place, a sort of spacious nothing.

I therefore, being gross in heart, and myself not clear to my own self, thought that, altogether nothing which was not extended over certain spaces, or spread out, or condensed, or bulky, or could or did assume *some such* dimensions. For through such forms as

my eyes were wont to run, through such images did my heart then range. Nor did I reflect that this effort of mind, whereby I formed such images, was not kindred with them, and that it could not, indeed, have formed them, unless itself had been something great. So then I used to think of Thee, Thou Life of my life, as vast, extending through infinite spaces, on every side penetrating the whole mass of the world, and beyond it in all directions stretching forth into space immeasurable and boundless; so that the earth should have Thee, heaven should have Thee, all things should have Thee, and they be bounded in Thee, but Thou have no bounds. But as the atmosphere which envelopes the earth does not hinder the light of the sun from passing through it, which penetrates it, not by making a rent in it or by cutting it asunder, but by filling it wholly; so I imagined that not only the heaven, air, and sea, but also the body of the earth was pervious to Thee, and that all parts, whether huge in size or the smallest particles, were capable of being penetrated by Thy Presence, by a secret inspiration, within and without, taking charge of all things which Thou hast created. Such was my surmise, for I could form no other notion; but it was false. For according to this, a greater portion of the earth would contain a greater portion of Thee, and a lesser portion a less: and thus all things being full of Thee, an elephant's body would contain more of Thee than a sparrow's, by how much bigger it was, and the greater space it occupied; and thus, Thou wouldest be present in parts of the world as it were in pieces, large in large parts, small in small. However, Thou art not such. But Thou hadst not yet enlightened my darkness.

CHAPTER II.

How Nebridius turned the Scale against the Manichaeans.

FOR it was enough for me, O Lord, to set against those deceived deceivers and dumb chatterers, since not from them did Thy word sound forth,—it was enough, I say, to set against them, that which long ago, while we were yet at Carthage, used to be proposed by Nebridius, at which all of us who heard it were much struck. "That nation of darkness," said he, "whatever they mean by it, which they are wont to set as an adverse mass over against Thee, what could it have done unto Thee, if Thou hadst refused to fight with it? If it should be answered, 'that any way Thou wouldst have sustained an injury,' then Thou must be liable to injury and corruption. But if they answered, 'then no hurt would have come to Thee,' then there could be no reason for fighting; and such a fighting, too, as involved the mingling of some portion or member of Thyself, or offspring of Thy very substance, with adverse powers and natures not created by Thee, to be by them so far corrupted and changed for the worse, as to be turned away from happiness into misery, and to stand in need of help in order to be extricated and cleansed; and that this was the soul, to the aid of which, when enslaved, contaminated, and corrupted, Thy own Word, which was free, pure, and sound, came—Itself also, however, corruptible, because of one and the same substance with the soul. Therefore if they say of Thee, whatever Thou art, that

is, in the Substance of Thy Being, that Thou art incorruptible, then all this would be false and abominable; but if corruptible, this is false, and at the very sound of the words detestable." It was then enough to urge this argument against those, who deserved to be completely vomited forth from a surfeited stomach, for they had no escape from the dilemma, without a horrible sacrilege of heart and tongue, by entertaining and giving expression to such things concerning Thee.

CHAPTER III.

That Free-will was the Cause of Sin.

BUT I also as yet, although I had a firm conviction that Thou our Lord, the true God, Who madest not only our souls but also our bodies, not only our souls and bodies but all creatures, and all things, wert incapable of defilement, alteration, or change in any part; yet I held that the cause of evil was not explained or unravelled: whatever indeed it was, I saw that it must be so sought after, that I should not through it be constrained to believe that the unchangeable God became changeable, lest I should become that very evil for which I was searching. Therefore I sought it out, feeling quite sure that what they said about it was wrong, and shunning their error with my whole soul, because I saw that in searching out the cause of evil, they were themselves filled with evil, in that they preferred to think that Thy substance should suffer evil rather than that *theirs* should commit it.

And I endeavoured to understand what now I heard,

that an act of our own free-will was the cause of evil, and Thy right judgment the cause of suffering; but I could not clearly see it. Striving then to draw forth my mind's gaze from the abyss, I was plunged into it again, and making frequent attempts, I was plunged back into it again and again. For the fact that I knew that I had a will as well as that I lived, raised me up into Thy Light. When I then willed anything or not, I was perfectly certain that the choice I made had its origin in myself, and I was on the point of perceiving that this was the cause of my sin. But what I unwillingly did, I perceived that I might be said to suffer rather than to do, and that I judged to be not a fault but a punishment, which I at once acknowledged that I justly underwent, thinking Thee just. But again I said, "Who made me?" was it not my God, Who is not only Good but Goodness itself? How, then, does it come to pass that my will chooses the evil and refuses the good, so that there is a just cause why I should be punished? Who has put this in me, and engrafted upon me this root of bitterness, seeing that the whole of me was made by my most secret God? If the devil is the author of it, who made him? But if he through a perverse will was turned from a good angel into a devil, how did he have an evil will, when as an angel his whole being was made by the most good Creator? By these thoughts I was again thrown back and stifled; but yet I sunk not so deep into that grave of error, where no one confesseth unto Thee,[1] as to believe that Thou dost suffer evil, rather than that man commits it.

[1] Ps. vi. 5.

CHAPTER IV.

That God must be Incorruptible.

FOR I was thus striving to find out the rest, as I had discovered that the incorruptible was better than the corruptible; and therefore I acknowledged Thee, whatever Thou wert, to be incorruptible. For never was there, or shall there be, any soul able to conceive of anything better than Thee, Who art the sovereign and best Good. But seeing, that most truly and certainly, the incorruptible is preferred to the corruptible, as I now preferred it, then, if Thou wert not incorruptible, I could in thought have arrived at something which was better than my God. When, then, I saw that the incorruptible was to be preferred to the corruptible, there ought I to seek Thee, and from that stand-point to consider "whence is evil," that is, how does that corruption arise, by which Thy Substance can in no way be injured. For in no way can corruption injure our God; by no will, by no necessity, by no unforeseen accident: since He is God, and what He wills is good, and He is that same Good; but to be corrupted is not good. Nor canst Thou be forced unwillingly to anything, since Thy Will is not greater than Thy Power; for were it greater, Thou wouldst be greater than Thyself, for the Will and Power of God is God Himself. And what can be unforeseen to Thee, Who knowest all things, and what nature is there which Thou *knowest not?* And what should we say more to *show "why that* Substance which God is cannot be

corruptible," for if it could be, it would thereby cease to be God?

CHAPTER V.

He seeks again, whence is Evil, and what is its Root.

AND I went on seeking out the origin of evil, and I sought it in an evil manner; and I did not perceive the evil, which was in my very search. And I made the whole universe pass before the eyes of my soul, whatever was visible in it, such as earth, sea, air, stars, trees, and mortal creatures; and whatever was invisible, as the firmament of heaven, and all the angels, and all the spiritual beings thereof; but these also, as if they had bodies, my imagination arranged here and there in places; and I made Thy creation one vast mass distinguished by the kinds of bodies—some real, some what I had feigned for spirits; and this mass I made vast, not as it really was, for that I could not know, but according to my own thoughts, yet bounded indeed on all sides. But Thee, O Lord, I imagined encircling it and penetrating it everywhere, Thyself being every way infinite: as if a sea were everywhere, and yet on all sides through immense space there were still one infinite sea, and it had within it a sponge of great but limited size; and this sponge should be in every part filled from that immense sea: so I thought Thy finite creation was full of Thee, the Infinite; and I said, Behold God, and behold what God hath created; and God is Good, and exceedingly and incomparably superior to these things: but yet, He, *Good Himself*, made them good, and behold how He

surrounds and fills them. Where, then, is evil, and from what source, and how did it creep in hither? What is its root, what its seed? Or is it at all? But why, then, do we fear and avoid that which has no existence? Or if our fear has no foundation, then is that fear itself evil, whereby the heart to no purpose is pricked and tortured, and so much the greater evil, as we have no reason to fear, and do fear. Therefore either there is the evil which we fear, or the evil of the fearing. Whence, then, is it? seeing God has made all these things, the Good made the good. He indeed, the greater and highest Good, made these lesser goods; still both Creator and created are all good. Whence, then, is evil? Or whence did He make these things? was there some evil matter, and did He form and order it, but leave something in it which would not turn to good? And why so? was He not strong enough to turn and change the whole, so that no evil might remain in it, He—the Almighty? Lastly, why does He will to make anything with it, and not rather by the same Almightiness make it cease altogether to exist? Or could it indeed exist against His Will? Or if it were from eternity, why did He suffer it so to exist for infinite spaces of time in the past, and then at length afterwards be pleased to make something out of it? Or if now suddenly He had willed to do some thing, would it not rather be the thing for an Almighty Being to do, to make evil disappear and He Himself exist alone, the whole, true, sovereign, and infinite Good? Or if it were not good for Him Who is Good, not to frame and mould something good, then the evil matter being removed and reduced to nothing, He might make afresh good matter, out of which to create

all things; for He would not be Almighty, if He could not form anything good without making use of that matter which He had not created. Such were the thoughts which I was turning over in my wretched mind, weighed down to the earth with gnawing anxieties and fears, lest the hour of my death should come before I had found the truth; yet the faith of Thy Christ, our Lord and Saviour, professed in the Catholic Church, was firmly fixed in my heart, indeed in many respects as yet unformed, and floating beyond the limits of sound doctrine, yet my mind did not relax its hold of it, but rather daily imbibed it more and more.

CHAPTER VI.

He rejects the Divinations of Astrologers.

I HAD by this time renounced the lying divinations and impious absurdities of the astrologers. For this also, O my God, let Thy Mercies from the inmost depths of my soul confess unto Thee. For it was Thou, Thou entirely; for who else recalls us from the death of every error, but the Life Which knows no death, and the Wisdom Which, needing no light for Itself, sheds Its light upon the minds which need It, by Which the universe is governed even to the leaves which float upon the breeze? Thou didst provide for that obstinacy of mine which stood out against Vindicianus, a sharp old man, and Nebridius, a youth of wonderful talent; the first affirming vehemently, and the latter frequently, though with somewhat of hesitation, "that there was no art by which the future could be foretold, but that men's conjectures often

if the servant asked me concerning the same stars, to tell him the truth, I ought to discover from them an ignoble family, a servile condition, and all other things the exact opposite to all that I had said about the former. Therefore, from the observation of the same stars, I should draw opposite conclusions, if I predicted the truth; but if I said the same in both cases, I should say in one what was untrue: it followed, therefore, that when true predictions were made from reading the stars, it was the result not of art but of chance; and whatever turned out to be false, was not from lack of skill in the art, but from a bad guess.

From this commencement, ruminating upon what I had heard, that none of those fools, who live by this profession, whom I longed to attack and confute as ridiculous, might urge against me, that either Firminus had told me, or his father him, a falsehood; I next thought of those who were twins, who were generally born so near together, that, whatever might be the effect they pretend the interval to have in the nature of things, it could not be noted by human observation, or be large enough to be reckoned in those figures which the astrologer is to inspect in order to prognosticate truly. Nor can they be true, because from inspecting the same figures, he would have to predict alike concerning Esau and Jacob, whereas the same things did not happen to both. Therefore he must speak falsely; or if truly, he must not say the same of both, though inspecting the same figures. It is not, then, by art, but by chance, that he speaks truth. But Thou, O Lord, most Just Ruler of the universe, though consulters and consulted be unconscious of it, dost by Thy secret Inspiration order it, so that he who consults

should hear that which he ought to hear according to the secret merits of souls, out of the abyss of Thy just Judgment, to Whom let no man say, Why is this? why that? Let him not so say, let him not so say, for he is but man.

CHAPTER VII.

What Distress of Mind he suffered on the Question of the Origin of Evil.

NOW then, O my Helper, Thou hadst loosed me from those chains, but the question "Whence is evil?" still remained, and there was no way out of it. But Thou didst not suffer me by any of those waves of thought to be borne away from the belief which I had in Thy Existence, and in the unchangeableness of Thy Substance, and in Thy Providence and Judgment of mankind, and in Christ, Thy Son, our Lord; and in the Holy Scriptures which the authority of Thy Catholic Church commended to us, whereby Thou hadst appointed the way of man's salvation, to that life which is to come after this death. These things, then, being safe and firmly fixed in my mind, I restlessly sought "whence is evil." What pangs of heart did I suffer in that travail! my God, what groans! and Thou wert listening then, and I knew it not. And when in silence I struggled, the silent anguish of my soul was a strong cry to Thy Mercy. Thou knowest what I suffered, and Thou alone. For how much could I convey by my tongue into the ears of my most intimate friends? Could the whole tumult of my soul, for which neither time nor tongue sufficed, reach them? Yet the *whole entered* into Thy Ears, which "I roared out from

the groaning of my heart," and "before Thee was my desire, and the light of mine eyes was not with me."[1] For that was within, but I was without; that was not in place, but I was intent only on those things which were contained in place, and found no place where I could rest, nor did they so receive me, that I could say "It is enough, and it is well;" nor did they send me back, where I might find satisfaction. For I was above them, but beneath Thee; and Thou art my true joy, when I am subject to Thee, and Thou hadst subjected to me the things Thou createdst below me. And this was the right temperament, and the middle region of safety for me, that I might retain Thy Image, and, serving Thee, have dominion over the body. But when I proudly rose up against Thee, and "ran against the Lord on His Neck, with the thick bosses of my buckler,"[2] the things far beneath me in the scale of being were set above me, and pressed me down, and there was no respite or relief. They met my eyes on all sides in heaps and masses, and the images of bodies presented themselves to my thoughts, opposing my return to Thee, as if they would say to me, "Whither art Thou going, unworthy and polluted one?" And these things had grown from my own wound, for Thou "humbledst the proud as one that is wounded,"[3] and by my pride I was separated from Thee; and my face was so swollen by it, that my eyes were closed.

[1] Ps. xxxviii. 9, 10. [2] Job xv. 26. [3] Ps. lxxxix. 10, V.

CHAPTER VIII.

How Divine Mercy came to Augustine's aid.

BUT Thou, O Lord, remainest for ever, and wilt not be angry with us for ever; for Thou hast pity on dust and ashes, and it seemed good in Thy sight to reform my deformities; and with inward pricks didst Thou excite me, that I might be uneasy, until Thou didst reveal Thyself to my inward sight. And my swelling was brought down by the secret touch of Thy medicine; and my mental eyesight confused and dimmed, was day by day healed by the smarting salve of my healthful sorrow.

CHAPTER IX.

In the Books of the Platonists he could find the Divinity of the Eternal Word, not the Humility of His Incarnation.

AND Thou, willing first to show me how "Thou visitest the proud, but givest grace unto the humble,"[1] and with what mercy Thou hast set before men the way of humility, in that Thy Word was made flesh and dwelt among men—Thou didst provide me, through the agency of one who was puffed up with most outrageous conceit, with certain books of the Platonists, translated from Greek into Latin. And in these I read,[2] not indeed in the same words, but to the same

[1] 1 Pet. v. 5. James iv. 6.

[2] S. *Augustine* is thought to refer to the book of Amelius the

purpose, and that, too, sustained by many and various reasons, that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: the Same was in the beginning with God: all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made: that which was made by Him was life, and the life was the light of men, and the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not."[1] And that the soul of man, though it "bears witness to the light," yet "is not" itself "the light;" but the Divine Word "is the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." And that "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." But that—"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not; but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, as many as believed in His Name,"[2] I read not there.

Also I read there, that God the Word "was born not of flesh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God."[3] But that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,"[4] I did not read there. I traced, indeed, in those writings, described in many and various ways, that "the Son was in the form of the Father, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God," because He was naturally the same. But that He emptied Himself, "taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross:

Platonist, who has this beginning of St. John's Gospel; "calling the Apostle a Barbarian."

[1] *John i. 1-5.*
[2] John i. 12.
[3] *John i. 13.*
[4] John i. 14.

wherefore God exalted Him from the dead, and gave Him a Name which is above every name, that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus is in the glory of the Father;"[1] those books contain not. For that before all times, and above all times, Thy Only-begotten Son remaineth unchangeably co-eternal with Thee, and that "of His fulness" souls "receive,"[2] so that they may be blessed; and that by partaking of the wisdom which abides in Him, they are renewed, so as to become wise, is to be found there. But that "in due time He died for the ungodly;"[3] and "Thou sparedst not Thine Only Son, but deliveredst Him up for us all,"[4] is not there. "For Thou hast hidden these things from the wise, and revealed them to babes;" that they who "labour and are heavy laden might come unto Him and be refreshed," for He is "meek and lowly in heart,"[5] and "the meek He guideth in judgment, and to the gentle He teacheth His ways,"[6] "beholding our lowliness and labour, and forgiving all our sins."[7] But those who are lifted up on the lofty steps of a knowledge as if more sublime, do not hear Him when He says, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls."[8] Although "they know God, yet they glorify Him not as the Lord, neither give Him thanks; but become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart is darkened; for saying that they were wise, they became fools."[9]

[1] Phil. ii. 6-11. [2] John i. 16. [3] Rom. v. 6.
[4] Rom. viii. 32. [5] Matt. xi. 25, 28, 29. [6] Ps. xxv. 9.
[7] Ps. xxv. 18. [8] Matt. xi. 29. [9] Rom. i. 21, 22.

And therefore did I read there also, that "the glory of Thy incorruptibleness had been changed" into idols and a variety of forms, "into the likeness of a corruptible man, and of birds, and of four-footed beasts, and of serpents;"[1] forsooth, into that Egyptian food for which Esau lost his birthright; since the first-born people honoured the head of a four-footed beast instead of Thee, turning in heart back to Egypt, and bowing down Thy Image, their soul, before the image of a calf that eateth hay;[2] these things I found in those books, but I did not feed upon them. For it pleased Thee, O Lord, to take away the reproach of being the lesser from Jacob, "that the elder should serve the younger;"[3] and Thou calledst the Gentiles into Thine inheritance. And I had come to Thee from the Gentiles; and I was intent upon the gold which Thou willedst Thy people should take out of Egypt, since it belonged to Thee, wherever it was. And Thou saidst to the Athenians by Thy Apostle, that "in Thee we live, and move, and have our being, as one of their own poets had said;"[4] and indeed these books came from thence. And I paid no regard to the idols of the Egyptians, to which they ministered with Thy gold, who "changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator."[5]

[1] Rom. i. 23. [2] Ex. xxxii. 1, 6. Ps. cvi. 19, 20.
[3] Rom. ix. 12. [4] Acts xvii. 28. [5] Rom. i. 25.

CHAPTER X.

Divine Things become clearer now to Augustine.

AND thence being admonished to return to myself, I entered into my own inner life, under Thy guidance; and I was enabled to do this, since Thou wert become my Helper. I entered, and with the eye of my soul, such as I then had, I saw above that eye of my soul, above my mind, the Unchangeable Light; not this common light, which is visible to all flesh, nor yet anything greater of the same kind, as though a brightness which grew more and more radiant, and which with its greatness filled all space. Such was not this light, but different, very different from all these. Nor was it above my soul as oil is above water, nor as heaven is above earth; but it was superior to me, as having made me, and I was beneath it, as having been made by it. He Who knows the Truth, knows It; and He Who knows It, knows eternity. Love knows it. O eternal Truth, and true Love, and loving Eternity! Thou art my God; for Thee do I sigh day and night. And when at first I knew Thee, Thou liftedst me up, that I might see what there was which I might see, and that I was not yet the one to see it. And Thou didst, striking my weakened eyes by Thy bright beams of light, beat me back, so that I trembled with love and awe; and I found myself to be far away from Thee in the land of unlikeness, as if I heard Thee saying to me from on high, "I am the Food of those grown up; grow, and you shall feed on Me; neither shalt thou, like bodily food, change Me

into thee; but thou shalt be changed into Me." And I learned, that "Thou for iniquity dost chasten man, and didst make my soul to consume away like a spider."[1] And I said, "Is Truth then nothing, because it is not spread out through finite or infinite space?" And Thou criedst to me from afar, "Verily, I Am that I Am;"[2] and I heard Thy cry as the heart hears, a hearing which leaves no room for doubt; for I could more easily doubt my own existence than the existence of the Truth, which "is clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made."[3]

CHAPTER XI.

How Creatures may be said to have being, and yet not to have being.

AND I regarded the other things which were below Thee, and I saw that they neither altogether exist, nor altogether do not exist: they exist in one way, for they come from Thee; in another way they may be said not to exist, for their being is not like Thine, for that is true Being which remains unchangeably. "It is good, then, for me to hold me fast by God;"[4] for if I remain not in Him, I cannot in myself; but He "remaining in Himself, reneweth all things."[5] And "Thou art my God, for my goods Thou hast no need of."[6]

[1] Ps. xxxix. 11. [2] Exod. iii. 14. [3] Rom. i. 20.
[4] Ps. lxxiii. 28. [5] Wisd. vii. 27. [6] Ps. xvi. 2.

CHAPTER XII.

All Things, which are, are good.

AND it became clear to me, that those things are good which yet are corrupted; which neither if they were supremely good, nor unless they were good in some respect, could be corrupted: for if supremely good, they would be incorruptible, if not good at all, there would be nothing to be corrupted. For corruption damages, but unless it lessened goodness, it could not damage. Either, then, corruption does not damage, which cannot be; or, which is most certain, all things which are corrupted, are thereby deprived of some good. But if they are deprived of all good, they must altogether cease to exist; for if they continued to exist, and were no longer able to be corrupted, they would be better than they were before, because they would remain in a state of incorruptibility. But what more monstrous, than to affirm that a thing has become better by losing all the good it possessed? Therefore, things deprived of all good cease to exist: and consequently as long as they exist, they are good; and further, therefore, whatever is, is good. That evil, then, the origin of which I had been searching out, had no being of its own, for had it a being it would be good. For either it must be something incorruptible, and so a great good, or something corruptible, and so have some good in it, to be capable of corruption. Thus it became evident and plain to me, that all things which Thou madest are good, nor is there any substance which was not made by Thee. And because Thou didst not make all things

equal, therefore all things are; for each is good in itself, and all very good together, because our "God made all things very good."[1]

CHAPTER XIII.

All Things made praise God.

AND there is nothing at all evil to Thee, nor yet to Thy creation as a whole, because there is nothing on the outside of it which can break in upon and corrupt that order which Thou hast established in it. But in parts of it, there are things, which from being out of harmony with certain other things, are reckoned evil; which very things harmonise with others, and therefore are good; and they are good in themselves. And all these things which are out of harmony with one another, are in harmony with this lower part of nature which we call earth, which has its sky with cloud and storm corresponding with it. Far be it, then, from me to say, "These things should not be!" for if I saw but these, I might indeed crave for better; but if only for such things as these, I am bound to praise Thee; for that Thou shouldst be "praised, from the earth,—dragons, and all deeps, fire, hail, snow, ice, and stormy wind, which fulfil Thy word," do show; "mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars; beasts and all cattle, creeping things, and fowls of the air; kings of the earth, and all people, princes, and all judges of the earth; young men and maidens, old men and young, praise Thy Name." But when "from heaven *these praise* Thee, these praise Thee," our God, "the

[1] Gen. i. Ecclus. xxxix. 21.

heights, all Thy angels, all Thy hosts, sun and moon, all the stars and light, the heaven of heavens, and the waters that are above the heavens—praise Thy Name;"[1] I did not now desire better things, because I thought of all together, and with a sounder judgment I decided that the things above were better than those below, but that both together were better than the things above alone.

CHAPTER XIV.

To a Man of sound Reason, no Creature of God can appear otherwise than good.

THERE is no soundness in those who are displeased with anything that Thou hast made; as there was none in me, when many things which Thou hadst made displeased me. And because my soul dared not to be displeased with my God, it would fain ascribe to another source that which displeased it. Hence my soul had gone into the opinion of two opposite substances, and found no rest in it, and spoke things which were irrelevant. And thence returning, it made for itself a god, extended through infinite spaces of all places, and thought it to be Thee; and placed it in its heart, and again had become the temple of an idol of its own, abominable to Thee. But after Thou hadst soothed my head, when I was unconscious of it, and closed "mine eyes, that they might not behold vanity,"[2] my former self began to die out, and my delirium was quieted; and I awoke in Thee, and saw Thee to be infinite in another way,—and this sight was not gained by the eye of flesh.

[1] Ps. cxlviii. 1-12. [2] Ps. cxix. 37.

CHAPTER XV.

How Truth and Falsehood are in Creatures.

AND I reflected on other things, and saw that they owed their being to Thee, and were all bounded in Thee; yet not in such a manner as if in a place, but because Thou holdest all things in Thy Hand, in truth; and all things, in so far as they have a being, are true; nor is there any falsehood, unless something is supposed to exist which does not exist. And I saw that all things harmonised, both in respect of their proper places and proper seasons. And that Thou, Who art alone eternal, didst not begin to work after innumerable spaces of time; for that spaces of time, both in the past and in the future, neither go nor come, save through Thee, working and abiding.

CHAPTER XVI.

All Things are good, although not suitable to all Persons indiscriminately.

AND I felt and discovered that it was nothing wonderful, that bread which is sweet to the healthy palate, should be distasteful to one diseased; and that to weak eyes the light should be painful, which to sound ones is a positive delight. And Thy Justice offended the wicked; much more the viper and the worm, which Thou hast created good, having their *fitting place* in the lower portions of Thy creation; *with which* the wicked themselves correspond, the

more unlike they are to Thee; but according as they become more like to Thee, so may they be compared with the superior creatures.

And I sought what iniquity was, and found that it was no substance, but the perversion of the will, turned away from Thee, the Supreme Being, to the lower things, and "casting out its inmost parts,"[1] and swelling externally.

CHAPTER XVII.

What retarded his Knowledge of Divine Things.

AND I marvelled that I now loved Thee, and no phantasm instead of Thee. Yet I did not eagerly press on to enjoy my God; but I was drawn to Thee by Thy Beauty, and soon borne down from Thee by my own weight, and I sorrowfully relapsed into those lower things; and the weight which dragged me down was carnal habit. But the remembrance of Thee did not fade away, nor did I at all doubt that there was One to Whom I should cling, but I was not yet in such a state as to be able to cleave to Him, for "the corruptible body presseth down the soul; and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things."[2] And I was most certain, that Thy "invisible things from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even Thy eternal Power and Godhead."[3] For seeking, what it was which led me to admire the beauty of bodies whether heavenly or earthly; and what enabled me to exercise sound judgment on mutable things, and to say, "This ought to be thus, that not

[1] *Ecclus. x. 10.* [2] Wisd. ix. 15. [3] Rom. i. 20.

so;" seeking, I say, from whence I derived this judgment, when I so judged, I arrived at the unchangeable and true eternity of Truth, above my changeable mind. And thus by degrees I passed from bodies to the soul, which perceives through the body; and thence to those inward powers, to which the outward senses of the body appeal, so far the beasts possess the same; and thence further to that reasoning faculty to which the information brought in by the senses is referred, that judgment may be passed upon it. Which faculty also finding itself variable, raised itself up to its own understanding, and abstracted my thoughts by habit, drawing itself from those troops of contradictory phantasms, that so it may discover what that light was by which it was besprinkled, when, all doubt being dismissed, it cried out "that the unchangeable is to be preferred to the changeable;" whence it knew the Unchangeable itself, for without some knowledge of it, it could have in no way preferred it to the changeable. And it came to that which IS, with the flash of a trembling glance. And then I saw Thy "invisible things, understood through the things which are made;" but I could not behold them with fixed gaze, and through my infirmity beaten back, I returned to my accustomed ways, carrying nothing away with me but a loving remembrance and a longing for that, the savour of which I had smelt, so to speak, but of which I was not yet able to eat.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Christ alone, the Way to Salvation.

AND I sought a way of gaining the strength which was requisite that I might enjoy Thee; and I found it not, until I had embraced "the Mediator of God and man, the Man Christ Jesus,"[1] "Who is above all, God blessed for ever,"[2] calling unto me and saying, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life,"[3] and mingling that food which I was too weak to receive with our flesh; for "the Word was made flesh,"[4] that Thy Wisdom, by which Thou hast created all things, might be capable of yielding milk for our infancy. For I did not as yet apprehend my Lord Jesus, as the humble grasps the Humble One; nor did I know the lesson which His weakness was to teach us. For Thy Word, Eternal Truth, superior to all the higher parts of Thy creation, elevates those who are brought low to Himself: but in this lower world He has built for Himself a lowly house of our clay, so that He might cast down from themselves such as willed to be subjected, and bring them over to Himself, healing their swelling, and nourishing their love; so that they may not go on any longer in self-confidence, but rather become weak, before whose feet Divinity Itself is weak, through taking our "coats of skins;"[5]

[1] 1 Tim. ii. 5.
[2] Rom. ix. 5.
[3] John xiv. 6.
[4] John i. 14.
[5] That is, our mortality, for skins are taken from dead animals. Our first parents were clothed with "coats of skins," figuring their liability to death.

and wearied, might prostrate themselves upon It, and be lifted up by Its rising.

CHAPTER XIX.

What he perceived of the Mystery of the Incarnation.

BUT I thought otherwise, conceiving only of my Lord Christ as of a Man of excellent wisdom, to Whom no one could be equalled; because in that He was wonderfully born of the Virgin, to be an example to us of the way temporal things should be despised for the obtaining of immortality, He seemed, through the Divine care for us, to have gained so great eminence as a Master. But what mystery "the Word was made flesh" had in it, I could not even suspect. Only I had learned out of what was written of Him and delivered to us, that He ate, drank, slept, walked, rejoiced, grieved, and conversed; that the flesh was not joined to Thy Word alone, but also with the human soul and mind. This all know who know the unchangeableness of Thy Word, which I already knew, as far as I could, nor did I at all doubt of it. For to move or not to move the limbs at will; now to be touched with some affection, now not; now to give utterance to wise sayings by signs, now to be silent,—are the properties of a soul and mind which are liable to changes. But if these things which are written about Him be false, all the rest would be suspected of untruth, nor in those writings would any saving faith remain for mankind. Since, then, they were written truly, I recognised in Christ man's entire nature; not *man's body only*, nor body and soul without mind,[1] but

[1] *An allusion* to the tripartite division of man's nature into

very man: I thought that He, not from being a form of Truth, but from a certain great excellence of human nature, and from a more perfect participation of wisdom, was to be set before others. But Alypius thought that the Catholics held that God was so clothed with flesh, that, besides God and flesh, there was no soul in Christ; and he supposed that it could not be said that He had a human mind. And seeing that he was well persuaded that the things recorded of Him could not be done save by a vital and rational creature, he was the more slowly moved towards the Christian faith. But when he had discovered that this was the error of the Apollinarian heretics, he was delighted with and won over to the Catholic Faith. But I confess that I learned somewhat later, that in that sentence, "the Word was made flesh," the Catholic belief was to be distinguished from the error of Photinus. The condemnation, indeed, of heretics makes the truth of Thy Church and sound doctrine, to stand out in bolder relief. "For there must also be heresies, that the approved may be made manifest among the weak."[1]

CHAPTER XX.

From the Writings of the Platonists he gained Learning, but increased thereby in Pride.

BUT having then read the books of the Platonists, and having been admonished by them to seek for in-

"body, soul, and spirit" (1 Thess. v. 23); the soul being subdivided into that part of the inner being which is the seat of emotion, etc. and that higher part, which is purely intellectual, here termed the "mind."

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 19.

corporeal truth, I saw Thy "invisible things, understood by the things that are made;" and though repulsed, I discerned what that was which the darkness of my mind hindered me from contemplating, being certain that Thou wert, and wert infinite, and yet wert not diffused through space, finite or infinite; and that Thou truly art, Who art ever the same, in no part, and in no motion, changeable; and that all other things are from Thee, by this one most sure argument, that they exist. Of these things indeed I was sure, yet not strong enough to enjoy Thee. Certainly I chattered as one skilled; but had I not sought the way in Christ our Saviour, I should have been not skilled but soon killed. For now I had begun to wish to appear wise, being full of my own punishment, yet I did not weep, but rather was puffed up with knowledge.[1] But where was that charity building on the "foundation" of humility "which is Christ Jesus"?[2] or, where would those books teach me it? Upon these, therefore, I believe that it was Thy purpose that I should light, before I studied Thy Scriptures, that it might be impressed on my memory how I was affected by them; and that afterwards, when I was softened by Thy Books, and my wounds were touched by Thy healing fingers, I might discern and distinguish what a difference there was between presumption and confession; between those who, seeing whither they were to go, saw not the way, and the way which leadeth to the beatific country, not only to behold it, but to dwell there. For had I first been instructed in Thy Holy Scriptures, and hadst Thou through my familiarity with them grown sweet unto me, and had I afterwards fallen upon those other

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 1. [2] 1 Cor. iii. 11.

volumes, they might perhaps have drawn me away from the solid ground of piety; or, had I persisted in that wholesome frame of mind which I had thence imbibed, I might have imagined that it could have been gained by the study of those books alone.

CHAPTER XXI.

What he found in the Holy Scriptures, which were not to be found in the Books of the Platonists.

THEREFORE with the greatest avidity did I seize the venerable pages of Thy Spirit, and more especially the Apostle Paul; and those difficulties disappeared, in which he sometimes seemed to me to contradict himself, and the text of his discourse not to accord with the testimonies of the Law and the Prophets. And now it seemed to me one uniform expression of chaste doctrines; and I learned "to rejoice with trembling."[1] Thus I began, and I found whatever truth I had read in those other books was here affirmed with the recommendation of Thy Grace; that he who sees may not "so glory as if he had not received,"[2] not only that which he sees, but also the power to see it, ("for what hath he which he hath not received?") and that he may not only be admonished to behold Thee, Who art ever the same, but also may be healed to retain Thee; and that "he who cannot see afar off" may yet walk on the way by which he may come to, behold, and retain Thee. For, although a man "delight in the law of God after the inward man," what shall

[1] *Ps. ii. 11.* [2] 1 Cor. iv. 7.

he do with that "other law in his members which warreth against the law of his mind, and bringeth him into captivity to the law of sin which is in his members?"[1] For "Thou art righteous," O Lord, "but we have sinned and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly."[2] Thy Hand has become heavy upon us, and "we are justly delivered" to that ancient sinner, the ruler of death; for he drew our will into likeness with his, whereby "he abode not in the truth." What shall a "wretched man" do? "Who shall deliver him from the body of this death" but "Thy Grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord,"[3] Whom Thou hast eternally begotten, and "createdst in the beginning of Thy ways,"[4] "in Whom the Prince of this world found nothing[5] worthy of death," yet killed Him, and "the handwriting which was contrary to us was blotted out."[6] These things were not in those books. Those pages had not this expression of piety, the tears of confession, "Thy sacrifice, the troubled spirit, the broken and humbled heart,"[7] the salvation of the people, "the Bridal city,[8] the earnest of the Holy Ghost,[9] the cup of our ransom." There no one sings, "Shall not my soul be subjected unto God?" For of Him cometh my salvation. For He is my God and my Salvation, my Defender, I shall no more be moved.[10] No one there hears Him call, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour." They disdain to "learn" of Him, for He is "meek and lowly in heart;"[11] for "these things Thou hast hid from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto

[1] Rom. vii. 22, 23. [2] Song of the Three Children v. 4.
[3] Rom. vii. 22, 25. [4] Prov. viii. 22. [5] John xiv. 30.
[6] Col. ii. 14. [7] Ps. li. 19. [8] Rev. xxi. 2.
[9] 2 Cor. v. 5. [10] Ps. lxii. 2, 3. [11] Matt. xi. 28, 29.

babes."[1] One thing it is from the wooded height to descry[2] the country of peace, and not to find the way to it, and to make vain attempts through impassable roads, beset and waylaid by fugitive deserters, with their captain "the lion and the dragon :"[3] and another, to keep on the way that leadeth thither, guarded by the Court of the Heavenly King, where those who have deserted the heavenly army do not molest it, for they avoid it as a torture. These things entered by wonderful ways into my inmost parts when I read that "least of Thy apostles,"[4] and had considered Thy works, and feared exceedingly.

[1] Matt. xi. 25.
[2] Deut. xxxii. 49.
[3] Ps. xci. 13.
[4] 1 Cor. xv. 9.

BOOK VIII.

He reaches the most memorable part of his life, his thirty-second year, in which, having consulted Simplicianus, and hearing of the conversion of Victorinus, he burns to imitate it. Then also the things which he learned concerning Antony, an Egyptian monk, and the conversion of two courtiers, from Pontitianus, more and more inflamed him; after a severe conflict between the flesh and the spirit, admonished by a heavenly oracle, he looks into the book of the Apostle, and having read the first verse upon which he lighted, he is entirely changed, and breaking the chains of his passions, is turned wholly to God.

CHAPTER I.

With the desire of entering on a better course of Life, he determines to go to Simplicianus.

MY God, let me with thanksgiving recall, and confess unto Thee Thy Mercies over me. "Let my bones" be bathed with Thy Love, and say, "Lord, who is like unto Thee?"[1] "Thou hast broken my bonds in sunder, I will offer unto Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving."[2] How Thou hast broken them I will declare; and all who worship Thee shall say, when they hear this, "Blessed is the Lord, in heaven and earth, great and wonderful is His Name." Thy words had stuck fast in my heart, and "I was hedged round about on every side by Thee."[3] Concerning Thy eternal Life I was certain, though I saw it "through

[1] Ps. xxxv. 10. [2] Ps. cxix. 16, 17. [3] Job i. 10.

a glass darkly."[1] Yet all doubt as to that incorruptible substance, from which all other substance had its existence, had been removed; nor did I desire to be more certain of Thee, but more steadfast in Thee. As to my temporal life, all things tottered, and "my heart had to be cleansed from the old leaven;"[2] and "the Way," the Saviour Himself, was pleasing to me, but as yet I felt reluctant to go through Its straitness. And Thou didst put into my mind, and it commended itself to me, to go to Simplicianus, who appeared to me a good servant of Thine, and one in whom Thy Grace shone. I had also heard that from his youth he had most devoutly lived to Thee. But now he had grown old, and after a long life spent zealously in Thy ways, he seemed to me likely to have acquired much experience; and so indeed he had. Out of it I wanted him to tell me (bringing before him my anxieties) what would be the best course for one in such a state of mind as I was, to walk in Thy way.

For I saw the Church full, and one went this way, and another that. But I disliked a secular calling, and it was very burdensome to me to have to bear so heavy a servitude, now that the passion for honour and for wealth no longer, as formerly, inflamed me. For now, compared with Thy Sweetness, "and the beauty of Thy house, which I loved,"[3] those things delighted me no longer. But as yet I was tenaciously held by the love of a woman; nor had the Apostle forbidden me to marry, although he had exhorted me to what was better, wishing greatly "that all men were as he himself was."[4] But I, weak as I was,

[1] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.
[2] 1 Cor. v. 7.
[3] Ps. xxvi. 8.
[4] 1 Cor. vii. 8.

chose the softer path; and from this one cause was harassed in all beside, languishing and wasted with withering cares, because in other matters which I disliked to bear, I was obliged to conform to that conjugal life, to which, having given myself, I was bound. I had heard from the mouth of Truth "that there were eunuchs, which had made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake;"[1] but "he that is able," saith he, "to receive it, let him receive it." "Surely vain are all men who are ignorant of God, and could not out of the good things which are seen find out Him Who is good."[2] But I now was not in that vanity; I had passed beyond it, and by the witness of Thy whole creation I had found Thee, our Creator, and Thy Word, God with Thee, and together with Thee one God, by Whom Thou createdst all things. There is also another kind of ungodly, who "knowing God, glorified Him not as God, nor gave Him thanks."[3] Into this also I had fallen; but "Thy Right Hand upheld me,"[4] and having taken me away, placed me where I might recover. For Thou hast said to man, "Behold, the fear of the Lord is wisdom;"[5] and "desire not to seem wise;" because they who "said that they were wise became fools."[6] But I had now found the "good pearl,"[7] and "having sold all that I had," I ought to have "bought" it, but I demurred.

[1] Matt. xix. 12. [2] Wisd. xiii. 1. [3] Rom. i. 21.
[4] Ps. xviii. 35. [5] Job xxviii. 28. [6] Rom. i. 22.
[7] Matt. xiii. 46. Prov. iii. 7.

CHAPTER II.

Of the Conversion of Victorinus, the Rhetorician.

THEN to Simplicianus I made my way, the father of Ambrose in receiving Thy Grace (then a bishop), whom Ambrose loved truly as a father. I related to him my circuitous paths of error. But when I told him that I had read certain books of the Platonists, which Victorinus, formerly one of the professors of rhetoric at Rome, had translated into the Latin tongue (and he, I heard, died a Christian), he congratulated me that I had not fallen upon the writings of other philosophers, which were full of fallacies and deceits "after the rudiments of the world,"[1] whereas the former in many ways led to God and His Word. Then, in order to exhort me to the humility of Christ, "hidden from the wise and revealed to babes,"[2] he took occasion to speak of Victorinus himself, whom he had known very intimately whilst he was at Rome; and of him he related that which I will not pass over in silence. For it contains great matter of praise to Thy Grace which should be confessed to Thee, how he—that old man, very learned, and highly skilled in all the liberal sciences, and one who had read and examined so many philosophical works; the teacher of so many noble senators; who also, in consideration of his excellent discharge of his office, had (which men of the world value highly) merited and obtained a statue in the Roman Forum; he, even to that age a worshipper of idols, and a partaker in

[1] Col. ii. 8. [2] Matt. xi. 25.

sacrilegious rites, to which nearly the whole Roman nobility were proudly devoted, and had breathed into the people also the love of a monstrous race of gods and the barking Anubis, who once "against Neptune, Venus, and Minerva"[1] had taken up arms, whom Rome once conquered, now worshipped, all which this old Victorinus with vociferous eloquence had defended so many years—he now was not ashamed to become the child of Thy Christ, and the babe of Thy font, having bent his neck to the yoke of humility, and submitted his forehead to the reproach of the Cross.[2]

O Lord, Lord, Who "hast bowed the heavens and come down, touched the mountains and they did smoke,"[3] by what means didst Thou glide into that breast? He was in the habit of reading, according to Simplicianus, the Holy Scriptures, and investigated most studiously and searched into all the Christian writings; and he said secretly to Simplicianus, and in strict confidence, "Know that I am already a Christian." And he answered, "I will not believe it, neither will I reckon you amongst Christians, unless I see you in the Church of Christ." But he laughingly replied, "Do walls then make Christians?" And this he often repeated, that he was already a Christian; and Simplicianus always made the same reply, and he as often renewed the jest about the "walls." For he feared to offend his friends, the proud demon-worshippers, from the top of whose

[1] Æneid, viii. 698-700.

[2] "The Cross is for us an admonition no less necessary than for them, to glory in the service of Jesus Christ, and not to hang down our heads as men ashamed thereof, although it procure us reproach and obloquy at the hands of this wretched world."

[3] Ps. cxliv. 5.

Babylonian dignity, as from the "cedars of Libanus," which the Lord had not yet "broken,"[1] he thought the whole weight of their enmity would rush down upon him. But after that, by reading and attention, he had derived firmness, and feared to be "denied by Christ before the holy angels, if he feared to confess Him before men,"[2] and appeared to himself to be guilty of a great offence, in being ashamed of the Sacraments of the humility of Thy Word, and not being ashamed of the sacrilegious rites of proud demons, in which he had partaken and whose pride he had imitated, he became shameless against vanity and shamefaced toward the truth, and suddenly and unexpectedly said to Simplicianus (as he himself told me), "Let us go to the Church; I wish to be made a Christian." But he, not containing himself for joy, went with him. And when he had begun to be imbued with sacramental instruction, not long after he gave in his name, that he might be regenerated by Baptism—Rome wondering, the Church rejoicing. "The proud saw, and were wroth; they gnashed with their teeth and melted away."[3] But the "Lord God" was to Thy servant his hope, and "he regarded not vanities and lying madness."[4]

Finally, when the time arrived for making a profession of his faith (which at Rome, they who are about to approach Thy Grace are accustomed to deliver from an elevated place in the sight of the faithful people, in a set form of words which had been committed to memory), he said, that the priests offered Victorinus to make his profession more privately, as the custom was with some who through bashfulness

[1] Ps. xxix. 5.
[2] Luke ix. 26.
[3] Ps. cxii. 10.
[4] Ps. xl. 5.

dreaded it; but he preferred to make confession unto salvation in the presence of the holy multitude. For it was not salvation that he taught in rhetoric, and yet he had publicly professed that. How much less, then, ought he to fear Thy meek flock when pronouncing Thy word, who had not feared to deliver his own words before mad crowds! When, then, he ascended to make his profession, all, as they recognised him, uttered his name one to the other, with a murmur of congratulation. And who there did not know him? And there ran in a subdued voice through the mouths of the rejoicing multitude, "Victorinus! Victorinus!" Suddenly did a burst of exultation rise, that they saw him; and suddenly was it hushed, that they might hear him. He pronounced the true faith with admirable boldness, and all wished eagerly to draw him to their very heart—yea, they embraced him with love and gladness; such were the hands of their embrace.

CHAPTER III.

That God and the Angels rejoice more in the Conversion of Sinners.

O GOOD God, what is it which makes man rejoice more at the salvation of a soul despaired of, and rescued from greater peril, than if there had always been hope for him, or the peril had been less? For Thou also, O merciful Father, "dost joy over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, that need no repentance."[1] And with great delight do we hear, when we hear with what joy

[1] Luke xv. 7.

"the sheep which had strayed is brought back upon the shepherd's shoulder," and "the piece of money is restored to Thy treasury, the neighbours rejoicing with the woman who found it:"[1] and the joy of the solemnity of Thy house forces us to weep, when we hear in Thy house of Thy younger son, that he "was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."[2] Thou, indeed, rejoicest in us and in Thy angels, holy through holy charity. For Thou art ever the same; for all things which are not eternal nor changeless, Thou for ever knowest in the same way.

What, then, passes in the soul, when it is more delighted with the things which it loves, when they are found and recovered, than if they had never been lost? Yea, for other things testify to this; and all things are full of witnesses, crying out, "So it is." For instance—the victorious commander triumphs; yet he would not have conquered unless he had fought, and the greater the peril in the conflict the greater the joy in the triumph. The tempest tosses the sailors, and threatens shipwreck; all become pale at impending death: sky and sea grow calm, and they joy much, because they feared so much. A dear one is sick, his pulse forebodes danger; all who desire that he may be restored are sick with him at heart: there is a favourable turn, he gradually regains his power of walking, and there is such joy as there was not before when he walked sound and strong. The very pleasures also of human life are gained by appointed and pleasurable toil, and do not fall out to us unexpectedly, and come upon us against our wills. There is no pleasure in eating and drinking, unless it be pre-

[1] Luke xv. 8. [2] Luke xv.

ceded by the pain of hunger and thirst. And drunkards eat something salt to inflame themselves with a burning thirst, which when the drink allays it, brings pleasure. It is appointed also that the betrothed bride should not immediately be given up, lest the husband should value her less, because he had not longed for her for a while first.

The same holds good in base and abominable delights; and in those which are permitted and lawful; in most sincere and honourable friendship; in him, too, "who was dead, and is alive again; had been lost, and was found." Everywhere the greater the joy, the greater the trouble which preceded it. What means this, O Lord my God, whereas Thou art everlasting joy to Thyself, and some things around Thee are ever rejoicing in Thee? How is it, that this portion of things ebbs and flows, is now alienated, then reconciled? Is this their mode of being? Is this all Thou didst assign to them, when from highest heaven to lowest depths of earth, from the beginning even to the end of time, from angel even to the smallest worm, from the first motion to the very last, every kind of good thing, and every just work of Thine, Thou hast appointed to each its place, and ordered each in its right season? Woe is me! How high art Thou in the highest, how deep in the deepest! and Thou departest nowhere, and hardly do we return to Thee.

CHAPTER IV.

Why we should rejoice more in the Conversion of Nobles.

ACT, O Lord, and do; stir us up and recall us; inflame and draw us; give ardour, grow sweet to us; now let us love, let us run. Do not many from a deeper hell of blindness than that of Victorinus return to Thee, and draw near to Thee, and are enlightened, receiving that light, which they that receive, receive from Thee "power to become Thy sons"?[1] But if these are less known to the people, those who do know them, rejoice less on that account. For when many rejoice together, in each there is an overflowing joy, for they kindle themselves and are kindled by one another. Then, because they are known to many, they influence many towards salvation, and so take the lead amongst many who follow them. And therefore the joy of those who preceded them is greater, in that they rejoice not in them alone. Otherwise may it never be, that in Thy tabernacle the persons of the rich should be preferred before the poor, or the noble before the ignoble, when rather "Thou hast chosen the weak things of the world to confound the strong; and the base things of this world and the contemptible, and the things which are not as the things which are, that Thou mightest bring to nought things that are."[2] And yet this same "the least of Thy Apostles," by whose tongue Thou didst utter these words, when through his warfare, Paulus, the proconsul, whose pride being conquered, was made to pass under the

[1] John i. 9, 12. [2] 1 Cor. i. 27, 28.

gentle yoke of Thy Christ, and became a provincial of the great King, loved to be called Paul, instead of his former name Saul, in token of so great and illustrious a victory.[1]

For the enemy is more overcome in him of whom he has more hold; by whom, too, he holds more. But the proud he holds more on account of their nobility, and through them more on account of their authority. By how much the more acceptable was the heart of Victorinus esteemed, which the devil had held as an unassailable possession, and the tongue of Victorinus, with which mighty and acute weapon he had destroyed many; so much the more abundantly ought Thy sons to rejoice, because our King "hath bound the strong man,"[2] and because they saw his "vessels taken from him and purified," and "made meet for Thy honour," and become "serviceable for the Lord, unto every good work."[3]

CHAPTER V.

What delayed his Return to God.

BUT when Thy servant, Simplicianus, related this to me about Victorinus, I burned with the desire to imitate him; for this was his object in relating it. But when he also added, that in the days of the Emperor Julian, a law was passed which prohibited Christians from teaching grammar and rhetoric; and

[1] S. Jerome says, "As Scipio, after the conquest of Africa, took the name Africanus, . . . so Saul being sent to preach to the Gentiles, brought back a trophy of his victory from the first spoils gained for the Church, the Proconsul Sergius Paulus."

[2] Matt. xii. 29.

[3] Tim. ii. 21.

that he willed rather to desert the wordy school than Thy Word, by which Thou makest "the tongues of them that cannot speak eloquent;"[1] he seemed to me not less brave than happy in having an opportunity of being wholly occupied with Thee. It was what I was longing for, but I was bound, not by the chains of another, but by my own iron will. The enemy held my will, and with me made a chain for me and bound me. For from a perverse will, lust was made; and in obeying lust, habit was formed, and habit not resisted, became necessity. By which links, as it were, joined together—therefore I call it a chain—was I held shackled with a hard bondage. But the new will which I began to have, freely to worship Thee, and to wish to enjoy Thee, O God, the only sure Sweetness, was not yet strong enough to overcome that other will, strengthened by age. So these my two wills—the one old, the other new; the one carnal, the other spiritual—contended together, and by their discord disturbed my soul.

So I understood by my own experience, what I had read, how "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh."[2] It was myself indeed in either will; yet more myself in that which I approved in myself, than in that which in myself I disapproved. For in this latter, it was more not myself, for in great part I rather suffered it against my will than acted willingly. But yet it was through me, that habit had obtained such a fierce ascendancy over me, because I had willingly come whither I willed not. And who can justly speak against it, when just punishment follows the sinner? Nor had I now the excuse which I used to plead, when I did not yet despise the world

[1] Wisd. x. 21. [2] Gal. v. 17.

prudently, avoiding the acquaintance of persons of great repute in the world, and thereby escaping all the distraction of mind connected with it, as he wished to have his mind free and at leisure as many hours as possible, to seek, or read, or hear something about wisdom. On a certain day then, Nebridius being absent (I do not remember why), lo, there came to my house to see me and Alypius, Pontitianus, a countryman of ours, in so much as he was an African, who was in high office at the Court. I know not what his business was; and so we sat down to talk together, and by chance upon a play-table which was before us he noticed a book, took, opened it, and found it, much to his surprise, to be the Apostle Paul; for he had expected to find it one of those books which was wearing me out in my profession. Then, laughing and looking at me, he congratulated me, and expressed his surprise that he had suddenly found these writings, and these only, before my eyes. For indeed he was a Christian, and one of the faithful, and often prostrated himself before Thee our God in church in frequent and long prayers. To whom when I had declared that these Scriptures were my chief study, a conversation arose from what he related of Antony,[1] the Egyptian monk, who was in

[1] S. Antony was born in A. D. 251. On hearing Matt. xix. 21 and vi. 37 read, he resolved to part with all his possessions, which were considerable, and to give them to the poor and to his neighbours. He retired into the desert, where he suffered great temptations. He had an ardent love for prayer, solitude, and retreat, but devoted a considerable time also to manual labour and reading. He is said to have been favoured with visions, and that great miracles were wrought through his instrumentality. He died at the age of one hundred and five years, greatly venerated.

very high repute among Thy servants, though to that hour we had not heard of him. Which, when he had discovered, he lingered upon that subject, giving us information about this great man, and marvelling at our ignorance about him. But we were amazed as we heard of Thy miracles so well attested, which were so fresh in memory, and almost in our own days, wrought in the right faith and Catholic Church. All wondered; we, that they were so great, and he, that we had not before heard of them.

Thence his conversation took a turn, and he began to speak about the numbers of monasteries, and their mode of life, a sweet odour to Thee, and of the fertile deserts of the wilderness, all of which was new to us. And there was at Milan a monastery, outside the city walls, under the care of Ambrose, full of good brothers, and we never knew it. He went on with and continued his discourse, and we listened intently. He told us how it happened that one afternoon at Triers, when the Emperor was being entertained with seeing the games of the Circus, he and three others of his companions went for a walk in the gardens which were adjacent to the walls, and as they walked in pairs, one went away with him, and the other two strolled by themselves; and these in their wanderings made their way into a certain cottage, in which some of Thy servants, "poor in spirit, of whom is the kingdom of heaven,"[1] dwelt, where they found a book which contained the life of Antony. One of them began to read it, and to admire and to be kindled by it; and as he read, to meditate on embracing that life himself, and quitting his worldly post to serve Thee. And these

[1] Matt. v. 3.

two were of those whom they call "Agents of Public Affairs." Then suddenly, filled with a holy love and sober shame, indignant with himself, he cast his eyes upon his friend, and said to him, "Tell me, I pray thee, what end are we striving for in all these our labours? What is our aim? for what cause do we accept office? Can we have any higher hopes in Court than to be favourites of the Emperor? And is not all that is there frail and full of danger? and through how many dangers must we attain to this greater danger? and when will it be? But a friend of God, if I desire it, behold, I may become at once." This he said, and in pain with the throes of a new life, he turned his eyes again to the pages; he read on, and was inwardly changed where Thou sawest, and his mind divested itself of the world, as soon became manifest. For whilst he was reading, and struggling with the waves of his heart, he groaned for a while, and discerned, and decided on a better course; and now being Thine, he said to his friend, "Now I have broken away from those hopes of ours, and am resolved to serve God; and this, from this hour, in this place, I begin upon. If you dislike to imitate me, do not oppose me." The other replied, that he would cleave to him and be his companion in so great a reward, and so great a service. And now both being Thine, they are building a tower, at the proper cost "of forsaking all and following Thee."[1] By this time Pontitianus and his companion, who had walked through other parts of the garden, seeking after them, came to the same spot, and having found them, admonished them to return, because it was growing late. But they, acquainting them with their

[1] Luke xiv. 26-35.

determination and purpose, and in what way they had arrived at such a firm resolution, besought them not to molest them, if they refused to unite themselves to them. Whereupon the others, being in nothing altered from their former selves, did nevertheless bewail themselves (as he said), and piously congratulated them, and commended themselves to their prayers, and with hearts weighed down to earth, returned to the palace; whilst the other two, with hearts set on heaven, remained in the cottage. And both were engaged to be married, but when their affianced brides heard of it, they also dedicated their virginity to Thee.

CHAPTER VII.

He suffered inward Pangs, when he heard what Pontitianus said.

THESE things Pontitianus related to me. But Thou, O Lord, whilst he was speaking, didst turn me round to myself, taking me from behind my back, where I had placed myself whilst unwilling to consider myself; and Thou didst set me before my face, that I might see how foul I was, how deformed and filthy, how spotted and ulcered. And I saw and loathed myself; and whither to flee to from myself I had not. And if I tried to turn away my eyes from myself, he went on with what he was saying, and Thou didst make me face myself again, and didst push me before my eyes, that "I might find out mine iniquity, and hate it."[1] I knew it indeed, but I dissembled with myself; and kept it from myself, and forgot it.

[1] Ps. xxxvi. 2.

But now, the more ardently I loved those whose healthful affections I was hearing of, for they had given themselves wholly up to Thee to be cured, the more did I hate myself as detestable when compared with them. For many years had passed with me, perhaps twelve, since the nineteenth year of my age, when on reading Cicero's "Hortensius," I was kindled with a desire for wisdom; and yet I was deferring to cast away mere worldly happiness, and to give myself to the pursuit of that, of which not the finding alone, but the bare search, was to be preferred to all the treasures and kingdoms of the nations even if found, and to an assemblage of all the pleasures of the body, placed at our disposal. But I, miserable youth, most miserable, in the very beginning of my youth had sought from Thee chastity, and said, "Give me chastity and continency, but not now." For I was afraid Thou wouldst hear me too soon, and heal me at once of the disease of concupiscence, which I wished to be satiated rather than to be extinguished. And I had gone through crooked paths in a sacrilegious superstition, not that I was convinced about it, but as preferring it to others, which I did not seek religiously, but attacked in a hostile manner.

And I had imagined, that I deferred from day to day to despise worldly hopes, and follow Thee only, because there appeared to be nothing certain to me to which to direct my course. And now the day had come wherein I was to be laid bare to myself, and my conscience was to reproach me: "Where art thou, tongue? Thou saidst, indeed, that for an uncertain truth thou wouldst not cast off the baggage of vanity. Behold it is certain, and yet that burden still presses

thee down; and those who have not so worn themselves out with searching after it, nor spent ten years and more in thinking about it, have cast off the burden from their shoulders, and taken wing." Thus was I gnawed within, and became mightily confounded with a horrible shame, when Pontitianus related these things. But having ended his story and finished the business which brought him, he went away; and I went to myself. What said I not to myself? With what lashes of words did I not scourge my soul, that it might follow me, striving to go after Thee? And it shrank back; it refused, though it had no excuse to offer. All its pretexts had been exhausted and confuted; there remained a mute trembling; and it dreaded no less than death, to be restrained from that flow of custom by which its very life was being wasted away.

CHAPTER VIII.

He retired into a Garden; what happened there.

THEN in this great struggle of my interior house, which I had powerfully excited with my soul, in my chamber, my heart—disturbed both in mind and countenance — I fell upon Alypius and exclaimed, "What is it ails us? what hast thou heard? The unlearned arise and take heaven by force: and we with our learning, heartless—behold, where we wallow in flesh and blood? Is it because they have preceded us, that we are ashamed to follow, or is it that we are not ashamed that we do not at least follow?" I said, I know not what, to this purpose, and in my excitement tore myself from him, whilst he,

gazing on me with astonishment, remained silent. For neither did I speak in my usual tone; and my brow, cheeks, eyes, colour, tone, expressed my state of mind more than what I said. There was a little garden to our lodging, of which, as of the whole house, we had the use; for our host, the landlord, did not live there. Thither my agitated heart bore me, where no one might interrupt the hot conflict which I was warring with myself, until it ended in that which Thou knewest, but I did not; I only knew that I was healthily beside myself, and dying, in order to live—knowing how evil I was, and not knowing what good thing I should shortly become. I retired then into the garden, and Alypius followed close after me. But I did not feel my privacy invaded by his presence; or how could he have left me alone in such a state? We sat down, as far as possible away from the house. I groaned in spirit, indignant with myself with a violent indignation, that I entered not into Thy Will and Covenant, my God, into which "all my bones cried out" unto me to enter, and extolled it to the skies: and we do not enter into it by means of ships, or coaches, or feet; neither had we to go so far as I had come from the house to the place where we were sitting. For not only to go, but also to arrive thither, nothing more was required than to will to go, but to will firmly and undividedly; not to turn and toss this way and that, a will half-wounded, struggling, rising in one part with another part falling.

At last, in the fever of my delay I made many movements with my body, which men sometimes wish to do and have not the power, for that they have not the limbs, or have them not at their command, being

either bound, weakened with disease, or otherwise hindered. For instance, if I tore my hair, beat my brow, clasped my hands round my knees; what I willed, I did. But I might have willed and not done it, if my joints had not the power of movement. So many things then I did, when "to will" was not in itself "to be able;" and I did not that which I, with a longing incomparably greater, wished to do, and which soon after, when I willed, I could do; because, when I should will, I should will entirely. For in such things the power was one with the will, and the will with the power; and yet was it not done: and more easily did my body obey the slightest willing of the soul, in moving its limbs at its desire, than the soul obeyed itself to accomplish in its will this great act of the will.

CHAPTER IX.

How it is that the Mind commands itself, and yet is resisted.

WHENCE this strange conduct? And why is it? Let Thy Mercy shine on me, that I may ask, if perhaps the hiding-places of human penalties, and the darkest pangs of the sons of Adam, may answer me. Whence is this unnatural conduct? and why? The mind commands the body, and it instantly obeys; the mind commands the mind, and is resisted. The mind commands the hand to be moved, and is so readily obeyed that the command is scarcely distinguished from the execution; yet the mind is mind, and the hand is body. The mind commands the mind to will, *that is, its own self*, yet it does not obey. Whence this

monstrous conduct? And why is it? It commands, I say, to will something, which it would not command it to do, unless it had already willed; yet that is not done which it commands. But it does not will with the whole will, therefore what it commanded is not carried out. For the strength of the command is equal to the strength of willing, and the lack of execution to the lack of will. For the will commands that there be a will; not another, but itself. Therefore, because it does not fully command, that which is commanded is not carried out. For if there were a full will, it would not command it to be, because it would already be. It is not therefore monstrous partly to will, and partly to will not, but a weakness of the mind, that it does not wholly rise,—by truth uplifted, by habit pressed down. And therefore there are two wills, because one of them is not the whole, for one has what the other lacks.

CHAPTER X.

Against the Manichaeans, who from two contrary Wills affirm that there are two contrary Natures.

"LET them perish from Thy presence,"[1] O God, as "vain talkers and deceivers"[2] of the soul perish, who, observing two wills in our deliberations, conclude, that there are two kinds of minds in us—one, good; the other, evil. But they themselves are evil, when they think such things; and they shall become good, if they think truly, and assent to the truth, that Thy Apostle may say to them, "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now light in the Lord."[3] For they,

[1] Ps. lxviii. 2. [2] Tit. i. 10. [3] Eph. v. 8.

wishing to be light in themselves, not "in the Lord," imagining the soul to be of the same nature as God, are made denser darkness; for through a terrible arrogancy, they "went back farther from Thee, from Thee, the true Light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world."[1] Take heed what ye say and be ashamed, and "draw near unto Him and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed."[2] I, when I was deliberating upon serving my Lord God now, as I had long purposed, was the same I who willed, and willed not—it was I, myself. I neither fully willed, nor fully willed not. Therefore I was contending with myself, and divided by myself. And this division took place indeed against my will, but it was not an evidence of another mind in me, but the punishment of my own. And therefore it is no more I that wrought it, but sin that dwelt in me;[3] the punishment of a more voluntary[4] sin, because I was a son of Adam.

For if there are so many contrary natures, as there are conflicting wills; there will not now be two natures only, but many. If a man deliberates, whether he will go to their meeting, or to the theatre, they cry out, "Lo! two natures: one good, draws him one way; another bad, draws him another. How else do you account for this hesitation between conflicting wills?" But I say, both are bad; that which draws to them, and that which draws back to the theatre. But they will not believe that will to be other than good which

[1] John i. 9. [2] Ps. xxxiv. 5. [3] Rom. vii. 17.

[4] "More voluntary," because in Adam the will had not been weakened, nor had as yet in it the downward tendency which resulted from the Fall.

draws to them. If, then, any one of us should deliberate, and through the conflict of two wills should be at a loss which to do, whether to go to the theatre or to go to our church, would not these also be at a loss what to answer? For either they must admit—which they are not willing to do—that the will by which men go to our church is good, as well as theirs who are instructed in and concerned with their sacraments; or they must suppose that there are two evil natures, and two evil souls in conflict in one man; and it will not be true, which they say, that there is one good and another bad; or they must be converted to the truth, and no more deny, when any one deliberates, that there is but one soul which is tossed to and fro by contrary wills.

Now, then, let them no more say, when they perceive two wills struggling together in one man, that two contrary souls, of two contrary substances, of two contrary principles, one good, the other bad, are in conflict. For Thou, O true God, dost condemn, rebuke, and convince them; as when, both wills being bad, one deliberates, whether he should kill another man by poison, or by the sword; whether he should invade this or that estate of another's, when he cannot both; whether luxury should purchase the pleasure, or avarice keep the money in his pocket; whether he should go to the circus, or to the theatre, if both be exhibited on the same day, or (I add a third thing) commit a theft from a neighbour's house, if opportunity offered, or (I add a fourth thing) commit adultery, if then also he had the means of doing so,—all these happening at the very same point of time, and all being equally desired, which cannot all be done at once; for the soul is divided asunder into four opposite wills, or even

more, such variety is there in the objects which are desired, nor do they yet allege that there is so great a number of different substances. So also is it with wills which are good. For I seek an answer from them, whether it is good to delight in reading the Apostle, or to delight in a sober psalm, or whether it is good to discourse upon the Gospel. They will reply to each, "It is good." But if all should delight them equally, and all at once? Do not different wills distract the heart of man, when he is deliberating which most of all to choose? yet they are all good, and are at variance, until one is chosen, whither the one whole will may be borne, which was before divided into many. So also, when eternity delights us above, and the pleasure of temporal good holds us fast below, it is the same soul which wills neither this nor that wholly; and therefore is torn asunder with grievous perplexity, while out of truth it prefers the first, but out of custom cannot part with the other.

CHAPTER XI.

The Struggle between the Spirit and the Flesh in Augustine.

THUS was I sick at heart and tormented, accusing myself more bitterly than I was wont, rolling and turning myself about in my chain, until that were wholly broken, by which I was now slenderly held, but was held still. And Thou, O Lord, wast urging me in my inward parts with a severe mercy, redoubling the lashes of fear and shame, lest I should again give over, and not bursting the slender chain which still remained,

it might regain its strength, and bind me more than ever. For I said within myself, "Come, let it be done now, let it be done now." And as I said it, I was on the point of coming to the resolve. I all but did it, yet I did not do it; yet I did not slide back to my old state, but kept my ground hard by, and took breath. And I made another effort, and almost succeeded, and was within a very little of touching and laying hold of it; and yet I did not reach it, and did not grasp it, hesitating to die to death, and to live to life; and the evil which I had been long accustomed to, had more hold over me than the better life not yet experienced: and the very moment wherein I was to become different, the nearer it approached me, the more horror did it strike into me; but it did not strike me back, nor turn me aside, but held me in suspense.

Toys of toys and vanities of vanities, my old loves held me back, and made my fleshly garment quiver—whispering softly, "Dost thou leave us? and from that moment shall we never be with thee any more? And from this moment will not this and that be allowed thee for ever?" And what did they suggest in that which I call 'this or that'? what did they suggest, my God? Let Thy Mercy turn it away from the soul of Thy servant! What defilements did they suggest! what shameful things! And I heard them now much less than half, and not as openly opposing me before my face, but as it were muttering behind my back, and furtively twitching me as I departed, to make me look back on them. Yet they did retard me, hesitating to snatch myself away and break from them, and leap whither I was called; the violence of

habit saying to me, "Do you think, you could do without them?"

But now the voice came to me very faintly. For in that direction whither I had set my face, and whither I trembled to go, there appeared to me the chaste dignity of Continence, calm and modestly cheerful, honestly alluring me to come and not doubt, and stretching out holy hands, full of multitudes of good examples. There, were so many boys and girls; there, many youths and every age; there, grave widows and aged virgins; and Continence herself in all, by no means barren, but "a fruitful mother of children,"[1] of joys, by Thee, the Husband, O Lord. And she smiled at me with an encouraging derision, as much as to say, "Why cannot you do what these youths and maidens have done? or can these and those do it in themselves, and not in the Lord their God?" The Lord their God gave me to them. Why standest thou in thyself, and so standest not? Cast yourself upon Him, do not fear that He will withdraw Himself and let you fall; cast yourself fearlessly upon Him, He will receive you, and will heal you. And I was ashamed beyond measure, for I still heard the whispers of those toys, and hesitatingly delayed. And she again seemed to say, "Stop your ears against those your unclean members on the earth, that they may be mortified. 'They tell thee of delights, but not as the law of the Lord thy God.'"[2] Such was the conflict within my heart, but only of myself against myself. But Alypius, who kept close to my side, awaited in silence the end of my unwonted excitement.

[1] Ps. cxiii. 8. [2] Ps. cxix. 85, O. V.

CHAPTER XII.

Admonished by a Voice, how he became entirely converted.

BUT when deep reflection had out of its secret fund gathered up and heaped together all my misery in the sight of my heart; a mighty storm arose, bringing a mighty shower of tears, which, that I might pour it all out, and weep aloud, I rose from Alypius; to be quite alone seemed more fit for the business of weeping; so I stole away so far, as that not even his presence could be a restraint to me. Thus was it then with me, and he perceived something of it, I know not what; for something I think I said, and thereby the sound of my voice seemed choked with weeping, and so I had risen up. But he remained where we had been sitting, stunned with amazement. I cast myself down under a certain fig-tree I know not how, and gave full vent to my tears, and floods broke forth from mine eyes, "an acceptable sacrifice[1] to Thee." And, not indeed in these words, but to the same effect, I spake much to Thee: "And Thou, O Lord, how long? How long, O Lord, wilt Thou be angry for ever?"[2] "O remember not our former iniquities,"[3] for I felt that I was bound by them. I ejaculated thus sadly—"How long?" how long, "to-morrow and to-morrow"? Why not at once? why not at this very hour end my foulness?

I spoke thus, and wept in the bitterest sorrow of my heart. And lo, I heard a voice as of a boy or girl from

[1] Ps. li. 19. [2] Ps. vi. 4. [3] Ps. lxxix. 5, 8.

a neighbouring house, I know not which, chanting, and frequently repeating, "Take, read; take, read." And immediately, with a change of countenance, I began to think most eagerly whether boys were in the habit of using these words in any of their games, but I could not recall any such expression to my mind. So repressing the violence of my weeping, I arose; interpreting it to be nothing less than a Divine admonition, that I should open the Book, and read the first chapter I should find. For I had heard of Antony, how he accidentally came in during the reading of the Gospel, and took what was being read as addressed to himself individually: "Go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, follow Me."[1] And by this oracle he was at once converted to Thee. Thus stirred, I returned to that spot where Alypius was sitting; for there I had laid down the volume of the Apostle when I rose up. I seized it, opened it, and read in silence the passage on which my eyes first fell: "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh in its lusts."[2] I would read no further, nor was there any need for me to do so; for instantly, when I had finished the sentence, by a serene light as it were infused into my heart, all the clouds of doubt were dispersed.

Then closing the Book, having put my finger or some other mark at the place, with a calm countenance I now made it known to Alypius. And he made known to me what was passing in him, of which I had no idea.

[1] Matt. xix. 21. [2] Rom. xiii. 13, 14.

He asked to see what I had read. I showed it him; and he looked beyond what I had read, and I did not know what followed. This followed, "Him that is weak in the faith, receive."[1] This he applied to himself, and told me. And being strengthened by this admonition, and by a determination and good resolve, such as was most suitable to his character (in which he had always differed very much, and that for the better, from me), without any vexatious delay he joined me. Thence we went to my mother, and told her—she rejoices. We relate how it came to pass; she exults and triumphs, and blesses Thee, "Who art able to do above that which we ask or think;"[2] for more she perceived had been granted to her for me, than she was wont to ask by her tears and pitiful groanings. For Thou convertedst me to Thee, so that I sought neither a wife nor any hope of this world, standing in that rule of faith, on which Thou hadst, so many years ago, showed me to her in a vision. And Thou didst "turn her mourning into joy"[3]—a joy more abundant than she had desired, and dearer and more chaste than she used to look for, from the offspring of my flesh.

[1] Rom. xiv. 1. [2] Eph. iii. 20. [3] Ps. xxx. 11.

BOOK IX.

He determines to give up the profession of Rhetoric, and to devote his life to God alone, but not before the Vintage Vacation, which was near at hand. In the meanwhile, in the country at Cassiacum, with his friend Verecundus, he prepares to receive the grace of Baptism; and at length, with Alypius and his son Adeodatus, he is baptized. Not long after, on his way to Africa, he reaches Ostia with his friends, and with his mother, Monica, whose life and holy character he gives a short summary of. She dies there in her fifty-sixth year, and Augustine's thirty-third.

CHAPTER I.

He praises the Goodness of God; acknowledging his own Misery.

"O LORD, I am Thy servant; I am Thy servant, and the son of Thy handmaid. Thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of praise."[1] Let my heart and my tongue praise Thee, and let all my bones say, "O Lord, who is like unto Thee?"[2] Let them say this, and answer Thou me, and "say unto my soul, I am thy Salvation."[3] Who am I, and what am I? What of evil has there not been in my deeds; or if not in my deeds, in my words; or if not in my words, in my will? But Thou, O Lord, art good and merciful, and Thy Right Hand regarded the depth of my death, and from the bottom of my heart didst drain out the abyss of corruption. And

[1] Ps. cxvi. 16, 17. [2] Ps. xxxv. 10. [3] Ps. xxxv. 3.

the whole change was this, not to will what I willed, and to will what Thou willedst. But where during those many years, and from what deep and low recess was my free-will called forth in a moment, so as to place my neck under Thy "easy yoke," and my shoulders to Thy "light burden,"[1] O Christ Jesus, "my Helper and my Redeemer"?[2] How sweet did it suddenly become to me, the very doing without the sweetnesses of those toys! And what I had feared to lose I now delighted to part with. For Thou didst cast them from me, Thou true and sovereign Sweetness. Thou didst cast them away, and didst enter in instead of them, Thyself, dearer than all sweetness, but not to flesh and blood; brighter than all light, but more inward than all recesses; more exalted than all honour, but not to those who are exalted in themselves. Now my mind was free from the gnawing cares of seeking and getting, and of wallowing in and exciting prurient passions. And I prated to Thee, my Brightness, my Riches, and my Salvation, the Lord my God.

CHAPTER II.

He defers giving up the Profession of Rhetoric until the Vintage Vacation.

AND it seemed good to me in Thy presence, not tumultuously to snatch away, but gently to withdraw, the service of my tongue from the markets of speech; that the young, who meditate not on Thy Law, nor Thy Peace, but on lying follies and forensic disputes, might no longer purchase from my lips arms

[1] Matt. xi. 30. [2] Ps. xix. 14.

for their raving. And it happened opportunely, that but a few days remained before the commencement of the Vintage Vacation, and I determined to endure them, so as to leave in the ordinary way, and having been redeemed by Thee, no more to return for sale. Our purpose then was known to Thee; but to men—except our own friends—it was not known. For we had agreed among ourselves, not to let it get abroad to any; although Thou to us, ascending from the "vale of tears,"[1] and singing the Gradual Psalms, hadst given "sharp arrows" and "burning coals," consuming "the deceitful tongue,"[2] which, whilst seeming to counsel for us, thwarts us, and in showing love consumes us, as it is accustomed to do its food.

Thou hadst wounded our hearts with the dart of Thy Love, and we have borne about with us Thy words, as it were fixed in our inmost parts; and the examples of Thy servants, whom Thou hadst made out of black into shining white, and out of dead into living, brought together in the bosom of our thought, burnt and consumed our heavy torpor, that we might not tend downwards to the lowest things; and they enkindled us intensely, so that every blast of "the deceitful tongue" only inflamed us the more vehemently—did not extinguish us. Nevertheless, because for "Thy Name's sake," which Thou hast "hallowed" throughout the earth, this our vow and proposal might have found some to praise it, it seemed like display, not to wait for the approaching vacation, but to quit beforehand a public profession, which was under the eyes of all; so that every one who saw it would be talking of my act, and, observing how near the time of vintage

[1] Ps. lxxxiv. 6. [2] Ps. cxx. 4, 2.

was,[1] which I wished to anticipate, would be ready to say, that I desired to appear a great person. And what benefit would that be to me, that people should make my intention the subject of their surmises and disputes, and that "our good should be evil spoken of?"[2]

Moreover, this very summer, my lungs began to give way, under too great literary labour, and my breathing became difficult, and pains in my chest convinced me that it was affected; my voice lost its clearness, and was unequal to much exertion; this troubled me at first, for it obliged me of necessity to lay aside the onerous task of teaching; or, if I could be cured and should recover, at least to leave it off for a time. But when the full will of "attending at leisure, and seeing that Thou art the Lord,"[3] arose in me and was confirmed; Thou knowest, my God, I began even to rejoice, that I had this excuse ready, not a false one, which might soften the offence taken by those who for the sake of their sons wished me never to have a son's freedom. Full, therefore, of such joy, I bore that interval of time, until it had run out; I know not whether it was twenty days, but whatever it was, it was bravely borne; for the thirst for gain, which used to support me through any heavy labour, had left me, and I, forsaken by it, should have been overwhelmed, had not patience taken its place. Perhaps some of Thy servants, my brethren, may say that I was wrong in remaining one hour in the chair of untruth, when my heart was fully set on Thy warfare; but I will not argue the point. But hast not

[1] During the law terms, and when harvest or vintage-time began; also during the great festivals of the Church, no process was allowed to go out.

[2] Rom. xiv. 16.

[3] Ps. xlvi. 10.

Thou, O Most Merciful Lord, forgiven and remitted this sin also in the holy water, with my others most horrible and deadly?

CHAPTER III.

Verecundus offers him his Country-house.

VERECUNDUS was racked with anxiety at that our blessing, because he, being still most firmly held by his bonds, saw he would lose our companionship. He was not yet a Christian: his wife, however, was one of the faithful; and yet by that chain he was held back more than by any other from that journey upon which we had entered. For he declared, that he would not become a Christian on any other terms than those on which he could not. However, he kindly offered us to remain in his country residence as long as we should stay in those parts. Thou, O Lord, shalt reward him "in the resurrection of the just,"[1] seeing that Thou hast already given him their "lot."[2] For although, during our absence, whilst we were now at Rome, he was overtaken with bodily illness, and during it being made a Christian and one of the faithful, had departed this life; yet thus hadst Thou mercy not on him only, but also on us; lest, remembering the exceeding kindness of our friend towards us, and not numbering him in Thy flock, we should be tortured with intolerable regret. Thanks to Thee, our God, we are Thine. Thy exhortations and consolations—faithful Promiser—assure us that Thou now recompensest Verecundus for that country-house at Cassiacum,

[1] Luke xiv. 14. [2] Ps. cxxv. 3.

where, from the turmoil of the world, we reposed in Thee, with the delights of the perpetual freshness of Thy Paradise; since Thou hadst forgiven him his sins upon earth, "in that mountain of curds,[1] Thy own mountain, Thy rich mountain."

At that time, then, he was tormented; but Nebridius was delighted. For although he also, not being yet a Christian, had fallen into that pit of most pernicious error, of believing the flesh of Thy Son, the Truth, to be only an appearance; yet emerging thence, he became such as we were, not being yet initiated in any of the Sacraments of Thy Church, but a most ardent inquirer after truth. Whom, not long after our conversion and regeneration by Thy Baptism, having also become a faithful member of the Catholic Church, and serving Thee in perfect chastity and continence amongst his kindred in Africa, when his whole household through him had been made Christian, Thou didst release from the flesh; and now he lives "in Abraham's bosom."[2] Whatever that may be which is signified by that bosom, there lives my Nebridius, my dear friend, but Thy son, O Lord, adopted of a freedman; there he lives. For what other place would there be for such a soul? There he lives, in the place about which he used much to question me, me an inexperienced poor fellow. Now he does not apply his ear to my mouth, but his spiritual mouth to Thy Fountain; and drinks in wisdom as much as he

[1] Ps. lxviii. 16. The allusion is to one version of Ps. lxviii. 16, in which "'high' hill" is rendered "mountain of curds." The "mountain" is Christ; the milk, the gifts of grace which flow from Him.

[2] *Luke xvi. 22.*

can receive, according to his thirst, happy without end. Nor do I think him to be so inebriated by it as to forget me, seeing Thou, O Lord, Whom he drinks, dost not forget us. Thus, then, we were at that time consoling the sad Verecundus (our friendship remaining) about our conversion, such as it was, and exhorting him to become faithful according to his condition, a conjugal one; and waiting for Nebridius to follow us, which, being so very near, he was all but doing: when, lo! those days rolled by at last; for long and many they seemed, through my love for restful liberty, that I might sing unto Thee from my whole inmost being. "My heart hath said unto Thee, I have sought Thy Face; Thy Face, Lord, will I seek."[1]

CHAPTER IV.

At Cassiacum some Books were written. Letters sent to Nebridius. With what heavenly Graces he was imbued, and with what great Devotion and Piety, whilst he explained the Psalms. He is suddenly freed from severe Toothache.

AND the day came on which I was in very deed to be freed from the Professorship of Rhetoric, from which I had already been freed in thought. And it came to pass. Thou didst deliver my tongue, whence Thou hadst already delivered my heart; and I blessed Thee, and joyfully retired with all my friends to the villa. What I accomplished there in writing, now indeed employed in Thy service, though in this

[1] Ps. xxvii. 8.

interval still panting from the school of pride—my books, composed of disputations with others and of soliloquies before Thee, testify; what passed between me and the absent Nebridius, my letters testify. And when will there be time enough to commemorate all Thy great benefits towards us at that period, especially when hastening on to yet greater mercies? For my memory brings it back to me, and it is sweet to me, to confess to Thee, O Lord, by what inward pricks Thou didst tame me, and how "Thou didst level me, bringing low the mountains and hills of my imaginations, and didst make straight my crookedness, and smooth my rough places;"[1] and how Thou didst also subdue Alypius, the very brother of my heart, unto the Name of Thy Only-begotten, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which at first he thought unworthy to find a place in our writings. For he would rather that they should be redolent of the "cedars" of the Schools, which "the Lord hath now broken down;"[2] than of the wholesome herbs of the Church, hateful to serpents.

With what accents did I address Thee, my God, when I read the Psalms of David, those faithful canticles and songs of devotion, which allow no swelling of spirit; untrained in Thy real Love, resting in that villa, with Alypius a catechumen as well as myself, my mother clinging to us, with a woman's attire but a man's faith, in the calmness of old age, with maternal love and with Christian piety! What accents did I offer Thee in those Psalms, and how was I inflamed with the love of Thee by them, and with the ardent longing to recite them, if possible,

[1] Is. xl. 4. Luke iii. 45. [2] Ps. xxix. 5.

through the whole world, against the swelling pride of mankind! And yet throughout the world they are chanted, and there is "no one who can hide himself from Thy heat."[1] With what vehement and bitter sorrow was I indignant against the Manichæans, whom yet again I had felt pity for, because they had no knowledge of those Sacraments, those medicines, and were mad against the antidote by which they could be made sane! How I would that they had been near me then, and when I was not aware that they were there, that they had looked upon my face, when I read the fourth psalm in that time of rest, and how it affected me—"when I called, the God of my righteousness heard me; in tribulation Thou hast enlarged me. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, and hear my prayer." O that they might have heard what I uttered on these words, I being unconscious of their presence, lest it should be thought that I spake what I did, on account of them. For, on the contrary, had I known that they were present and were listening to me, I should not indeed have made use of the same words or have spoken in the same manner; neither, if I had done so, would the words have had the same effect, as when I alone and for myself had spoken them before Thee, out of the familiar affection of my spirit.

I quaked with fear, and then again I burned with hope and with exultation in Thy Mercy, Father. And all these found an outlet through my eyes and lips, when Thy good Spirit, turning unto us, said, "O ye sons of men, how long will ye be slow of heart? why love vanity and seek after a lie?"[2] For I had loved vanity, and I had sought after a lie. And Thou, O

[1] Ps. xix. 6. [2] Ps. x. 2.

Lord, hadst already "magnified Thy Holy One,[1] raising Him from the dead,[2] and placing Him at Thy Right Hand, whence He should send from on high His Promise,[3] the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth:"[4] and He had already sent Him, but I knew it not. He had sent Him, because He was now already magnified, rising again from the dead. But till then "the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."[5] And the prophet cries, "How long, slow of heart? why do ye love vanity, and seek after a lie? And know ye, that the Lord hath magnified His Holy One." He cries, "How long?" He cries, "Know ye;" and I so long in ignorance "loved vanity, and sought after a lie;" and therefore I heard and trembled, since it was said to such, as I remembered that I used to be myself. For in those phantasms, which for truths I had held, was there vanity and falsehood. And I broke forth into many loud and vehement expressions, in the bitterness of my recollections, which would they had heard who yet "love vanity and seek after a lie." They would, perchance, have been troubled, and have vomited it out, and Thou wouldest hear them, when they cried unto Thee; for by a real death of the flesh "He died for us, Who maketh intercession for us"[6] before Thee.

I then read, "Be ye angry, and sin not." And how was I moved, my God, who had now learned to be angry with myself concerning the past, that I might not sin in time to come! Yes, and to be justly angry too; for that it was not another nature of the race of darkness which sinned for me, as they say who are

[1] Ps. x. 3. [2] Eph. i. 20. [3] Luke xxiv. 49.
[4] John xiv. 16, 17. [5] John vii. 39. [6] Rom. viii. 34.

not angry with themselves, and "treasure up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and of revelation of Thy just judgment."[1] Nor were my "good things" external, nor sought with my bodily eyes in yonder sun. For those who seek joy from without soon become empty, and are poured out upon the things which are seen and temporal, the images of which with starving mind they lick. Oh, if they could only be worn out by their hunger, and would say, "Who will show us good things?" And we would answer and they hear, "The light of Thy Countenance is signed upon us, O Lord." For we are not "that Light which enlighteneth every man,"[2] but we are enlightened by Thee, that we, who were sometimes darkness, "may be light in Thee."[3] O that they could see the Internal, the Eternal, which I having tasted, was agonized because I could not show It to them, so long as they brought me their heart in their eyes, far from Thee, and said, "Who will show us good things?" For there, when I was angry at myself within in my chamber, when I had sacrificed, slaying the old man, and begun to meditate on the new, hoping in Thee—there hadst Thou begun to grow sweet to me, and hadst put "gladness in my heart."[4] And I cried out, as I read this outwardly, and experienced it inwardly; nor did I desire my earthly goods to be increased, consuming time and consumed by time, whereas I possessed in Thy eternal Simplicity another sort of "corn and wine and oil."[5]

And I cried out in the following verse, with the loud cry of my heart, O "in peace"! O "in the selfsame"! O what is it he said, "I will sleep and take

[1] Rom. ii. 5. [2] John i. 9. [3] Eph. v. 8.
[4] Ps. iv. 7. [5] Ps. iv. 8.

my rest"? For who shall oppose us, when that saying which is written cometh to pass, "Death is swallowed up in victory"?[1] And Thou art that "Self-same" Who indeed "changest not;" and in Thee is rest which forgets all labours, since there is none beside Thee, nor are we to seek after those many other things, which are not like Thyself; but "Thou, Lord, only hast established me in hope." I read, and I was all on fire; but I knew not what to do for those deaf and dead, of whom I had been a pest myself, barking bitterly and blindly against those Writings, which are sweet with the honey of heaven, and luminous with Thine own Light: and about the enemies of this Scripture I was consumed.

When shall I recall all that passed in those days of rest? But neither have I forgotten, nor will I conceal how sharp was Thy scourge, how wonderfully swift was Thy Mercy. Thou didst send me at that time an excruciating pain in my teeth; and when it had grown so bad that I could not speak, it came into my heart to beseech all those who were with me to pray to Thee for me, the God of all kinds of health. And I wrote it on wax,[2] and gave it to them to read it. Presently so soon as we had knelt in earnest prayer, that pain departed. But what was that pain? and whither did it go? I was terrified by it, I confess, my Lord, my God, for I had never felt anything like it since I had been born. And Thy Will was discovered to me in this depth, and rejoicing in faith I praised Thy Name. And that faith

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 54.

[2] That is, according to the ancient method of writing, on waxen tablets with an iron pen. These tablets are referred to *in Ch. IX.* of this Book.

suffered me not to be at rest concerning my past sins, which were not yet remitted to me by Thy Baptism.

CHAPTER V.

He consulted Ambrose as to what he was to read.

WHEN the Vintage Vacation had ended, I gave notice to the people of Milan to provide their scholars with another vendor of words; for the reason that I had chosen to give myself to Thy service, and because I was no longer able to continue the professorship, on account of my shortness of breath and the pain in my chest. And by writing I made known to Thy prelate, the holy man Ambrose, my former errors and my present intention, so that he might advise me what portion of Thy Books I had best read, in order that I might be the more prepared and disposed for the reception of so great grace. And he directed me to the prophet Isaiah; I believe, because he foretells, beyond others, and more clearly, the Gospel and the call of the Gentiles. But I, not understanding what I first read of this book, and supposing that the whole would be the same, put it by, to be taken up again, when more expert in the Lord's words.

CHAPTER VI.

He is baptized at Milan, with Alypius and Adeodatus.

THEN, when the time had come when I ought to give in my name, having left the country, we

went back to Milan. It pleased Alypius also to be born again in Thee with me, being already clothed with the humility which befits Thy Sacraments, and a most valiant tamer of the body, so as even to have trodden the frozen ground of Italy, barefoot—an unusual act of daring. We added to us the boy Adeodatus, carnally born of my sin. Thou hadst made him well. He was hardly fifteen, and in ability surpassed many grave and learned men. Thy Gifts, I confess unto Thee, O Lord my God, Creator of all, and having exceeding power to reform our deformities; for I had nothing in that boy but the sin. For if we brought him up in Thy discipline, Thou and none other inspired us to do so; Thy Gifts I confess unto Thee. There is a book of ours entitled "The Master;" in it there is a dialogue between himself and me. Thou knowest that all the thoughts which are there put into the mouth of the person who converses with me, were his own, when he was in his sixteenth year. Many other more remarkable things I have found of his. I was awed by his gifts; and who but Thyself could be the worker of such wonders? Soon didst Thou take away his life from the earth; and now I recall him with a sense of greater security, fearing nothing for his childhood or youth, nor at all for him. Him we associated with us to be born with us at the same time in Thy Grace, and to be brought up with us in Thy discipline; and we were baptized, and the anxiety about our past life fled from us. Nor could I have enough in those days of the wonderful sweetness I enjoyed, in considering the depth of Thy Counsel concerning the salvation of mankind. O how I wept *in* Thy hymns and canticles, deeply touched by the

voices of Thy Church, sweetly resounding! Those voices flowed into my ears, and the truth distilled into my heart, and thence the affection of my devotion broke forth, and tears ran down, and I found relief therein.

CHAPTER VII.

The Institution of Singing in Church at Milan. The Discovery of the Bodies of S. Protasius and S. Gervasius.

THE Church of Milan had not long begun to make use of this kind of consolation and exhortation —the voices and hearts of brethren singing together with great devotion. Certainly it was a year or not much more, since Justina, the mother of the Emperor Valentinian, a boy, persecuted Thy servant Ambrose, on account of her heresy, into which she had been seduced by the Arians. The pious people kept watch in the church, ready to die with their bishop, Thy servant. There my mother, Thy handmaid, taking a chief part in those anxieties and watchings, lived in prayer. We, cold as yet through lacking the heat of Thy Spirit, were still stirred by the alarm and commotion of the city. At that time it was instituted that, after the custom of Eastern parts, hymns and psalms should be sung, lest the people should languish with the very weariness of grief; and from that day to this, the custom has been retained, and is followed by many, indeed by almost all Thy congregations throughout the world.

Then by a vision didst Thou reveal to that memorable prelate where the bodies of Gervasius and Pro-

tasius, the martyrs, lay hid; which for so many years Thou hadst kept uncorrupted in Thy secret treasury, whence Thou mightest opportunely bring them forth to repress this feminine but royal rage. For when they, having been discovered and dug up, were translated with due honour to the Cathedral of S. Ambrose,[1] not only those whom unclean spirits vexed were healed, but also a man who had been blind for many years, a citizen, and well known in the city, having asked and discovered the cause of the people's tumultuous joy, leaped up and desired his guide to lead him thither. Having reached the place, he begged to be allowed to touch with his handkerchief the bier of "the death of Thy saints, precious in Thy sight,"[2] which when he had done, and had applied the handkerchief to his eyes, they were immediately opened. Thence did the fame spread abroad; thence Thy praises resounded, shone forth; thence the mind of that enemy, although not turned to the health of faith, was repressed from the fury of persecuting. Thanks to Thee, my God. Whence and whither hast Thou conducted my memory, that I should confess to Thee these things also, which, great as they are, I had passed by in forgetfulness? And yet then, when "the odour of Thy ointments" was so fragrant, did we not "run after Thee."[3] Therefore, I wept the more at the singing of Thy hymns, having long panted for Thee, and at last breathing in Thee, as far as the upper air can find its way in this house of grass.

[1] "Ambrosianam Basilicam," in the original.
[2] Ps. cxvi. 5. [3] Cant. i. 2, 3.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Conversion of Evodius. The Death of Augustine's Mother, whose early Care he relates.

THOU "that makest men to dwell of one mind in a house,"[1] didst add to our company Evodius also, a young man of our own city; who, serving as one of those in charge of Public Affairs, was converted to Thee, and baptized before us; and giving up a secular warfare, girded himself for Thine. We were together, and going to live together with our holy purpose. We sought for some place where we might serve Thee more usefully, and were returning together to Africa; and when we came as far as Ostia on the Tiber, my mother died. I pass over much, because I hasten much. Accept my confessions and thanksgivings, O my God, for innumerable things of which I make no mention. But I will not pass over anything which my soul would bring forth concerning her, Thy handmaid, who brought me forth, both in the flesh that I might be born into this temporal light, and in the soul, that I might be born into the Light eternal. Not of her, but of Thy Gifts in her I will speak; for neither did she make, nor did she educate herself. Thou didst create her; nor did her father and mother know what a being was to come from them. And the rod of Thy Christ, trained her in Thy fear, the discipline of Thy Only-begotten Son, in a pious home with a good member of Thy Church. Yet she did not so much attribute her good discipline to her mother's care, as

[1] Ps. lxviii. 6.

to that of a certain very old maid-servant who had carried about her father when a child, as elder girls are wont to carry little ones on their backs. For which cause, and on account of her decrepitude and good behaviour, she, in a Christian household, was well respected by its heads. Whence also the care of her master's daughters intrusted to her, was diligently discharged, restraining them when there was need—earnest with a holy strictness, and teaching them with sober wisdom. For, excepting those times when they had their moderate repasts at the parental board, she would not allow them to drink even water, though parched with thirst, thus taking precautions against a bad habit, and adding this sound advice, "You drink water now, because wine is not within your reach; but when you shall come to be married, and have cupboards and cellars under your own control, you will spurn water, but the habit of drinking will last." By this plan of teaching, and power of ruling, she checked the greediness of childhood, and regulated the very thirst of the girls to such a proper moderation, that they no longer had an inclination for that which was unbecoming.

And yet there had crept upon her, as Thy handmaid told me her son—there had crept upon her a love of wine. For when she, as was usual, as being a sober maiden, was ordered by her parents to draw wine from the cask, holding the cup under the opening, before she poured the wine into the bottle, she sucked in a little with the tips of her lips; for more than that a right feeling forbad. Nor this did she take from any desire for an intoxicating drink, but out of that exuberance of youth, which breaks out in foolish tricks

and is wont to be repressed, in youthful spirits, by the gravity of their elders. And thus to that little adding daily a little, for "he that despiseth little things falls by little and little,"[1] she glided into such a habit, that she drank off with one draught her little cups, very nearly full of wine. Where was then that sage old woman, and her earnest restrictions? Would anything avail against this latent disorder, if Thy medicine, O Lord, did not watch over us? Father, mother, teachers, absent; Thou, present, Who createdst, Who calledst, Who also by those who are set over us workest some good towards the salvation of our souls, what then didst Thou do, my God? How didst Thou cure her? How heal her? Didst not Thou draw out a severe and sharp taunt from another soul, as a surgeon's lancet from a hidden store, and with one incision remove all that corruption? For a maid-servant with whom she used to go to the cask, having quarrelled with her young mistress, as it happens, when alone with her, threw at her this fault, in a tone of most bitter reproach, calling her "wine-bibber." She was so stung by this reproach, that she saw her foulness, condemned it at once, and renounced it. As flattering friends pervert, so reproachful enemies oftentimes correct. Yet Thou dost not requite them for the effect of their doings, but according to their intentions. For she, being angry, sought to annoy her young mistress, not to cure her; and did this in secret, either because such was the time and place of their quarrel, or, lest perchance she herself should be in danger of blame because she had not told the matter before. But Thou, O Lord, Ruler of heaven and earth

[1] Ecclus. xix. 1.

Who turnest to Thy purposes the deepest torrents, and the ordered turbulence of the tide of the ages, healest one soul by the unsoundness of another; that no one, when he observes this, should impute it to his own power, if another, whom he wishes to be corrected, should be corrected in consequence of a word of his.

CHAPTER IX.

He continues to praise his Mother's Character.

BROUGHT up, then, chastely and soberly, and by Thee made dutiful to her parents, rather than by her parents to Thee, so soon as she had reached a marriageable age, having been given over to a husband, she served him as her lord; and busied herself to win him to Thee, revealing Thee to him by her virtues, in which Thou madest her beautiful, and reverently amiable, and admirable to her husband. For she so bore his unfaithfulness in the married state, as never to have any quarrel with him upon the subject. For she waited for Thy Mercy upon him, that believing in Thee, he might become chaste. But besides this, as he was especially good-natured, so was he hot in temper. But she had learned not to oppose a husband when angry, not only by deed, but not even by word. But so soon as he was become subdued and quiet, and she saw a fit opportunity, she would explain the matter, if perchance he should have been unreasonably offended at something she had done. In short, whilst many wives, whose husbands were less choleric, carried the marks of blows even on their disgraced faces, and would with their friends talk over the habits of their

husbands, she would blame their tongues rather, giving them, as if in jest, grave advice; "that from the time they heard the matrimonial tablets read to them, they should regard them as indentures, whereby they were made servants; so, being mindful of their condition, they ought never to be defiant towards their lords." And when they, knowing what a fierce husband she had to endure, marvelled that it never had been reported, nor that there had been ever any evidence, that Patricius had struck his wife, or that there had been any domestic quarrel between them, even for a single day,—in a confidential manner asked the cause, she taught them her method, which I have related above. Those who followed it, rejoiced in their experience; those who disregarded it, were still subject to violence.

Her mother-in-law also, being at first irritated against her by the whisperings of wicked servants, she so overcame by her compliant ways, her perseverance in patience and meekness, that of her own accord she disclosed to her son what those interfering servants said, by which the domestic peace between herself and her daughter-in-law had been disturbed, and asked that they might be punished. Then after he—in obedience to his mother, and for the well ordering of his family, and with a view to the future agreement of its members—had flogged those discovered, in conformity with her wish who had discovered them, she promised a like reward to any who should say, to gratify her, anything evil against her daughter-in-law; and none henceforth daring to do so, they lived together with a remarkable sweetness of friendliness.

This great gift also, upon that good handmaid of

Thine, in whose womb Thou createdst me, my God, my Mercy, Thou hadst bestowed, that between disagreeing and jarring spirits, where she was able, she showed herself so pacific, that hearing on both sides many most bitter things, such as a turgid and undigested discord is apt to cast up, when with a present friend concerning an absent enemy the crudities of enmity are breathed out in sour colloquies, she, however, would never carry anything from the one to the other but what tended to produce reconciliation. This might seem to me a trifling good, did I not know by sad experience countless numbers who, through some horrible and widespread contagion of sin, not only disclose to angry enemies the words of angry enemies, but add thereto what was never said; whereas to a humane man, it ought to appear but a light thing, not to foment or exaggerate the enmities of men by evil words, unless one aims further by good words to extinguish them. Such was she, Thyself, her inmost Director, teaching her in the school of the heart.

At last, her husband, now drawing towards the close of his earthly life, did she gain over to Thee; nor in him, now one of the faithful, had she to complain of that which, when he was yet an unbeliever, she had to endure. She was also the servant of Thy servants. Whoever of them had known her, did in her greatly magnify and honour and love Thee; for they felt Thy Presence in her heart, the fruits of a holy conversation bearing witness to it. For she had been "the wife of one man, had requited her parents, had piously ruled her house, was well reported of for good works. She had brought up children,"[1] so often "travailing in birth

[1] 1 Tim. v. 9, 4, 10.

with them,"[1] as she perceived that they went astray from Thee. Finally, of all of us, O Lord—since of Thine own Gift Thou permittest Thy servants to speak—who before she slept in Thee, lived in companionship together, having received the grace of Thy Baptism, she took as much care, as if she had been the mother of us all; so served us, as if she were the child of all.

CHAPTER X.

A Conversation with his Mother concerning the Kingdom of Heaven.

IT came to pass, as the day drew near on which she was to depart out of this life (which day Thou knewest, we not knowing it), that—as I believe, Thou by Thy mysterious ways so ordering it—she and I stood alone, leaning at a certain window which overlooked the garden of the house which we occupied in Ostia on the Tiber; where, withdrawn from the crowd, we were recruiting from the fatigue of a long journey, before our voyage. We then conversed alone very sweetly; and "forgetting those things which were behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,"[2] we were inquiring between ourselves, in the presence of the Truth, Which Thou art, of what nature the eternal life of the Saints would be, "which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man."[3] But yet we panted with the mouth of our heart after those heavenly streams of Thy fountain, "the fountain of life which is with Thee;"[4] that being

[1] Gal. iv. 19.
[2] Phil. iii. 13.
[3] 1 Cor. ii. 9.
[4] Ps. xxxvi. 9.

sprinkled thence according to our capacity, we might have some conception of so great a subject.

And when our conversation reached this point, that whatever delight the bodily senses were capable of, in any material light, seemed, in respect of the pleasures of that higher life, not only unworthy of comparison, but even of being named, we, raising ourselves with more ardent affection towards the "Same,"[1] did pass step by step through all corporeal things, even the heaven itself, from which sun, moon, and stars shine upon the earth; yea, we soared higher still by inward musing, speaking and admiring Thy works; and we came to our own minds, and passed beyond them, that we might touch that region of unfailing richness, where Thou "feedest Israel"[2] for ever with the food of truth, and where life is that Wisdom by which all things were made, both which have been and which will be; and Itself is not made, but is as It hath been and ever will be; yea rather to "have been" and "to be about to be" cannot be said of It, but "to be" only, seeing It is eternal. And whilst we spoke and panted after that, we touched It for a moment with the whole effort of our heart, and we sighed, and left there bound "the first-fruits of the Spirit;"[3] and so returned to the sound of our own mouth, in which the word hath both its beginning and end. And what is there that is like to Thy Word, our Lord, Who "endureth in Himself"[4] without growing old, and "maketh all things new"?

We were saying then: If to any one the tumult of the flesh were silenced, if the impressions of earth and water and air, and the poles too, were silenced, and

[1] Ps. iv. 8, "Idipsum," V.
[2] Ps. lxxx. 1.
[3] Rom. viii. 23.
[4] Wisd. vii. 27.

the soul herself silent to herself, and by not thinking of self were to rise above self, if all dreams and imaginary revelations, every tongue, and every sign, and all that is transient, be silenced absolutely, since if any could hear, these all would say, "We made not ourselves, but He made us Who abideth for ever;"[1] if these having spoken, now should be silenced, having rendered our ears more attentive to Him Who made them, and He alone should speak, not through them, but by Himself, that we may hear His Word, not by a tongue of flesh, nor by the voice of an Angel, nor by a sound from a cloud,[2] nor by the darkness[3] of a similitude, but might hear Himself Whom in these we love, might hear Himself without them—as we now strained ourselves, and with a bound of thought touched the eternal Wisdom Which remaineth over all;—could this last, and other visions of a far different kind be withdrawn, and this one ravish and absorb and envelop its beholder with inward joys, so that his life might be everlastingly like that one moment of understanding for which we now sighed, would not this be, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"?[4] And when shall this be? Shall it not be when "we all shall rise again, but shall not all be changed"?[5]

I was thus speaking, and if not in this very manner and these exact words, yet Thou knowest, Lord, that in that day, where we talked of such things, this world with all its pleasures grew contemptible to us, even as we spake, then my mother said, "Son, for my own part, nothing in this life gives me any further delight. What do I here any longer, and why I am still here, I

[1] Ps. c. 3. [2] Ps. lxxvii. 17. [3] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.
[4] Matt. xxv. 21. [5] 1 Cor. xv. 51.

know not, now that my hopes in this world are concluded. There was one thing for which I wished to stay a little longer in this life, that I might see thee a Catholic Christian before I died. My God hath granted me this, and more than this, even that I should see thee, despising all earthly happiness, and devoted to His service: what do I still here?"

CHAPTER XI.

Her falling into a Swoon, and her Death.

I DO not remember what I said to her, in reply to these things. However, within five days of this time, or not much more, she was prostrated by fever. And being very ill, one day she fell into a swoon, and was for a little while insensible. We hastened to her, and soon she was brought back to consciousness, and gazing upon me and my brother, who were standing by her, she said to us inquiringly, "Where was I?" Then beholding us, stunned with grief, she said, "Here shall you bury your mother." I was silent and suppressed my tears. But my brother said something, to the effect that he wished that she might die in her own country and not abroad, as being a happier lot. When she heard this, with an anxious look, chiding him with her eyes for savouring of such things, and then gazing on me, "See," saith she, "what he says;" and soon after she said to us both, "Lay this body anywhere; let not the care for it be any concern to you. This only I beg of you, to remember me at the Lord's Altar, wherever you may be." And when she had thus expressed her mind with what words she could,

she ceased to speak, labouring with pain as she grew worse.

But I, reflecting upon Thy Gifts, which Thou, O unseen God, dost infuse into the hearts of Thy faithful servants, whence such wonderful fruits do spring forth, did rejoice and give Thee thanks, recalling what I before had known, how she had ever been agitated with anxiety as to her burial-place, which she had provided and prepared for herself by the side of her husband. For because they had lived very peaceably together, she had also wished (so little is the human mind able to lay hold of things divine) this addition to that happiness, and to have it recorded among men, that after her travels beyond the seas, it was granted to her that in the same earth should be buried all that was earthly of this united couple. But when this vanity had, through the plenteousness of Thy Goodness, begun to be no longer in her heart, I knew not, and I rejoiced admiring what she had so disclosed to me; although in that conversation which we had at the window, when she said, "Do I hear any longer?" she did not seem to have any desire to die in her own country. I heard too, afterwards, that when we were now at Ostia, she was talking one day with some friends of mine in motherly confidence, whilst I was absent, about the contempt of this life, and the advantage of death; and when they, astonished at the courage which Thou hadst given to her, a woman, asked her whether she did not dread to leave her body so far from her own city, she said, "Nothing is far from God, nor is there any occasion to fear, lest at the end of the world He should not know whence He should raise me again." Then, on the ninth day of her illness, and in

the fifty-sixth year of her age, and my thirty-third, was that religious and pious soul freed from the body.

CHAPTER XII.

How he mourned for the Death of his Mother. The Sacrifice for the Dead.

I CLOSED her eyes; and a great sorrow flowed into my heart, and tears began to flow, which by a violent mental effort I sucked back with my eyes till their fountain was dry again, and what did I not go through in that struggle! But when she breathed her last, the boy Adeodatus wept aloud, and only by our united efforts was he silenced. In this way also something of the child in me, which was about to find a vent in weeping, through the youthful voice of my heart, was checked and silenced. For we did not think it fitting to celebrate such a funeral with lamentations and wailings; because by these we are for the most part wont to express our sorrows for those who die unhappily, or, as it were, for their total extinction. But she did not die unhappily, nor did she die entirely. Of this we were assured by the testimony of her life, by her faith unfeigned, and on grounds which admitted of no doubt.

What, then, was it which caused my deep inward pain, but the fresh wound, received from the sudden break of that most sweet and precious habit of living together? I was rejoicing indeed in her testimony, that in her last illness, kindly noticing my attention, she called me "dutiful," and recorded with great affection of love, that she had never heard any harsh

or reproachful word come forth out of my mouth against her. But yet, O my God, Who madest us, what comparison is there between the honour I paid to her and the services she rendered to me? Being, then, reft of such a comfort as she was, my soul was torn with grief, and my life was torn asunder as it were, which had been, out of hers and mine, made one.

The boy then having been restrained from crying, Evodius took up the psalter, and began to sing the psalm, "I will sing of mercy and judgment to Thee, O Lord,"[1] to which the whole household responded. But hearing what we were doing, many brethren and religious women came together; and whilst those whose duty it was, in the usual way, were making arrangements for the funeral, I, in a part of the house where I might properly do so, discoursed upon something suitable for such a time, together with those who thought that I ought not to be left alone; and thus, with the fomentation of Thy Truth I mitigated that anguish, known to Thee—they knowing nothing of it, as they eagerly listened and imagined that I had no sense of sorrow. But I, in Thy Ears, where none of them heard, was reproaching the softness of my affection, and was holding back the flow of grief, which for a little while yielded to me, and then came with its own violence, not enough to burst out into tears, nor to cause a change of countenance, though I knew how much self-restraint I was practising in my heart. And as I was extremely vexed that these human things had such power over me, necessary as they are in the due order and lot of our condition, with another grief I grieved for my grief, and was tormented by a double sorrow.

[1] Ps. ci. 1.

And behold, the body was carried out; we went, we returned without tears. For neither in those prayers which we poured forth to Thee, when the Sacrifice of our Ransom was offered on her behalf,[1] the corpse being now placed by the side of the grave, before it was laid in it, as the custom there is, not even in those prayers did I weep; yet was I the whole day in deep sorrow in secret, and with a troubled spirit besought Thee, as well as I could, to heal my sorrow, but Thou didst not do it; impressing, I believe, upon my memory by this one test how strong is the force of habit, even on the mind which now no longer is fed by some delusive word. It seemed also good to me to go and bathe; because I had heard that bath (*balneum*) was derived from the Greek word βαλανεῖον, for the reason that it dispelled anxiety from the mind. Lo, this also I confess unto Thy Mercy, "Father of the fatherless,"[2] that I bathed, and was the same afterwards as before. For the bitterness of grief did not perspire out of my heart. Then I slept, and awoke, and found my grief in no small degree subdued, and as I lay alone in my bed, those true verses of Thy Ambrose came to my thoughts; for Thou art

> "The God Whose creatures all things are,
> Whose rule extends to every star,
> Who deck'st the day with beauteous light,
> With grateful slumbers cloth'st the night;
> That rest may to our wearied frame
> Bring strength, fresh labour to sustain,

[1] It was the custom of "the ancients" to have a celebration of the Holy Communion at funerals, for the repose of the dead and the comfort of the living.

[2] Ps. lxviii. 5.

And worn-out minds may solace find,
When they their pressing griefs unbind."

And then by degrees did I bring back my former thoughts of Thy handmaid, and her pious conversation towards Thee, her holy care and kind service towards us, of which I was suddenly deprived; and it was a comfort to me to weep in Thy sight, concerning her and for myself, concerning myself and for her. And I let go my tears which I had before restrained, that they might flow out as much as they pleased, spreading them as it were a bed beneath my heart, and I rested on them, since only Thy Ears were nigh me, not those of man, who might have put a disdainful interpretation on my weeping. And now, O Lord, I confess it to Thee in writing. Let him read who wills, and put upon it whatever interpretation he likes; and if he finds sin in this weeping for my mother during some small part of an hour—for the mother who for a while was dead to mine eyes, who had for many years wept for me, that I might be alive in Thine Eyes—let him not deride me; but rather, if he be a man of large charity, let him weep himself for my sins before Thee, the Father of all the brethren of Thy Christ.

CHAPTER XIII.

He prays for his deceased Mother.

BUT now, my heart being healed of that wound in so far as I was open to the reproach of having too earthly an affection, I pour out to Thee, my God, on behalf of that Thine handmaid a far different kind of tears—tears which flowed from the agitation of my

spirit when I thought of the perils of every soul "that dieth in Adam."[1] Although she, "made alive in Christ," even when not yet delivered from the flesh, had so lived, that Thy Name was praised by her faith and conversation; yet dare I not say, that from the time when Thou regeneratedst her by Baptism, no word had gone forth from her mouth contrary to Thy precept. And it is said by the Truth, Thy Son, "Whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."[2] And woe be even to those whose lives were praiseworthy, if in Thy scrutiny Thou puttest away mercy! But because Thou art not extreme in searching out our sins, we hope with confidence to find some place with Thee. But who is there who, if he count up his true merits to Thee, does ought else but count up to Thee Thine own Gifts? O that men would know themselves to be but men; and that "he that glorieth, would glory in the Lord"![3]

I then, O my Praise and my Life, God of my heart, setting aside for a while her good deeds, for which I joyfully thank Thee, now entreat Thee for the sins of my mother. Hear me, through the Medicine of our wounds Who hung on the Tree, and Who, sitting at Thy Right Hand, "maketh intercession for us."[4] I know that she was merciful to others, and "forgave her debtors their debts; do Thou also forgive her her debts,"[5] whatever she may have contracted through the many years she lived, after the water of salvation. Forgive, O Lord, forgive, I pray Thee, "enter not into judgment with her."[6] Let "Thy Mercy exalt itself

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 22.
[2] Matt. vii. 3; v. 22.
[3] 2 Cor. x. 17.
[4] Rom. viii. 34.
[5] Matt. xviii. 35; vi. 12.
[6] Ps. cxliii. 2.

above Justice,"[1] for Thy words are true, and Thou hast promised "mercy to the merciful;"[2] who became so only through Thy gift, Who wilt have mercy on whom Thou wilt have mercy, and wilt "have compassion on whom Thou hast had compassion."[3]

And I believe that Thou hast already done that which I ask Thee, but "accept, O Lord, the free-will offerings of my mouth."[4] For she, when the day of her dissolution was now at hand, took no thought to have a sumptuous covering for her body, or to have it embalmed with spices; nor did she desire to have a fine monument, or care to be buried in her own country. She gave us no injunctions concerning such things as these, but desired only that a memorial of her might be made at Thine Altar, which she had served without interruption day by day; whence she knew was dispensed the holy Victim, by Which the "handwriting that was against us is blotted out,"[5] by Which the enemy was triumphed over, who, reckoning up our offences, and seeking something to lay to our charge, "finds nothing in Him,"[6] in Whom we conquer. Who will refund to Him the innocent blood? Who will restore to Him the price by which He bought us, so as to take us out of his hand? Unto the Sacrament of which our price, Thy handmaid bound fast her soul with the bond of faith. Let none from Thy Protection tear her. Let not "the lion and the dragon"[7] either by force or by deceit: for she will not plead that she owes nothing, lest she should be convicted and held by the cunning accuser; but she will reply, that "her

[1] James ii. 13. [2] Matt. v. 7.
[3] Exod. xxxiii. 19. Rom. ix. 15. [4] Ps. cxix. 108.
[5] Col. ii. 14. [6] John xiv. 30. [7] Ps. xci. 13.

before Thee, in confession; and with my pen, before many witnesses.

CHAPTER II.

Seeing that God knows all Secrets, why confess to Him.

AND from Thee, O Lord, "unto Whose Eyes"[1] the deep recesses of the human conscience "are naked," what could be hidden in me, even if I were unwilling to confess it to Thee? For I might hide Thee from myself, not myself from Thee. But now, when my groaning is a witness that I am displeased with myself, Thou shinest out, and art pleasing, and loved and longed for; that I may be ashamed of myself, and reject self, and choose Thee, and neither please Thee, nor myself, except in Thee. To Thee, therefore, O Lord, I am manifest, whatever I am, and with what fruit I confess unto Thee, I have mentioned. Neither do I thus simply with words and sounds of the flesh, but with words of the soul, and the cry of thought, which Thine Ear heareth. For when I am evil, to confess to Thee is nothing else than to be displeased with myself; but when good, to confess to Thee, is nothing else than not to attribute it to myself, because Thou, O Lord, "dost bless the just,"[2] but first Thou "justifiest him when ungodly."[3] My confession, then, is made in Thy sight, my God, silently, and not silently. For it is silent as to sound; it cries aloud as to affection. For neither do I speak anything rightly to man, which has not been first heard by Thee; nor

[1] Heb. iv. 13. [2] Ps. v. 13. [3] Rom. x. 5.

dost Thou hear any such utterance from me which Thou hast not first said unto me.

CHAPTER III.

With what Fruit he makes Confession next of what he is, not now of what he was.

WHAT good, then, is it to me, that men should hear my confessions,[1] as if they could "heal all my infirmities"?[2] The race is curious to know the lives of others, backward to correct their own. Why seek they to hear what I am, from myself, who will not hear what they themselves are, from Thee? And how can they tell what I say of myself is true, when they hear it from myself; for "no man knows what is in man, but the spirit of man which is in him"?[3] But if they hear from Thee of themselves, they cannot say, "The Lord lieth." For what is it to hear from Thee of themselves, but to know themselves? And who can know himself and say, "It is false," unless he lieth himself? But because "charity believeth all things,"[4] amongst those at least whom it unites together by union with itself, I also, O Lord, do so confess unto Thee, that men may hear, to whom I cannot prove whether I confess truly; yet they believe me, whose ears charity opens to me.

Yet do Thou, my most inward Physician, make

[1] He is not speaking of Confession as a part of Repentance, made with a view to Absolution, but of "the Confessions" which he is writing. He is discussing with himself as to whether such a revelation of his life as he is now making can bring to himself and to others any advantage.

[2] Ps. ciii. 3. [3] 1 Cor. ii. 11. [4] 1 Cor. xiii. 7.

clear to me what fruit I may reap from this undertaking. For the confessions of my past evils, which "Thou hast forgiven" and "hast covered,"[1] that Thou mightest gladden me in Thee, transforming my soul by faith and Thy Sacrament—when read and heard, stir up the heart, that it sleep not in despair and say, "I cannot," but awake to a sweet sense of Thy Mercy and of Thy Grace, whereby the weak, whoever he be, becomes strong, who by it is made conscious to himself of his own weakness. And it delights the good to hear of the past evils of those who are now freed from them; not indeed that they delight in the evils themselves, but because they have ceased to exist. With what fruit, then, O Lord my God, to Whom my conscience daily makes confession, resting more upon Thy Mercy than its own innocency—with what fruit, I beg of Thee, do I even to men, before Thee, by means of these my writings now confess, not what I have been, but what I am? For the fruit of confessing the past I have seen and stated. But what I now am, at this very moment of making my confessions, many desire to know, both of those who have, and of those who have not known me, and have heard something of me, from myself or from others; but their ear is not at my heart, where I am, whatever I am. They want therefore to hear me confessing something of my inner life, where neither eye, nor ear, nor mind can penetrate, yet they are ready to believe what I say; but will they understand? For charity, which maketh them good, tells them that I shall not lie, in my confessions; and charity in them gives credence to me.

[1] Ps. xxxii. 1.

CHAPTER IV.

What great Fruit he proposes in this Confession.

BUT what fruit do they seek in this? Do they desire to congratulate me, when they hear how near I approach Thee, by Thy Gift; and to pray for me, when they hear how much by my own weight I am retarded? To such I will reveal myself. For it is no small fruit, O Lord my God, that "by many thanks should be given to Thee on our behalf,"[1] and that by many, intercession should be offered for us. Let a fraternal spirit love in me what Thou teachest is to be loved, and grieve in me for that which Thou teachest is to be lamented. Let a fraternal spirit do this, not that of a stranger, not "of the strange children, whose mouth talketh of vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity,"[2] but that fraternal spirit which, when it approves me, rejoices about me, and when it disapproves me, grieves for me; because, whether it approves or disapproves, it loves me. To such I will manifest myself; let them breathe freely at my good, and sigh over my evil. All that is good in me is from Thy appointment, and Thy Gift; my evils are my own offences, and Thy judgments. Let them breathe freely at the one, and sigh over the other; and let their song and their weeping ascend into Thy sight, from their fraternal hearts, "Thy censers."[3] But do Thou, O Lord, delighted with the odour of Thy holy Temple, "have mercy upon me according to Thy great Mercy,"[4] for Thy Name's sake; and on no

[1] 2 Cor. i. 11.
[2] Ps. cxliv. 11.
[3] Rev. viii. 3.
[4] Ps. li. 1.

account forsaking what Thou hast begun, complete what is still imperfect in me.

This is the fruit of my confessions, not of what I was, but of what I am, to confess this, not only in Thy Presence with a secret "exultation with trembling,"[1] and a secret grief with hope; but in the ears also of the believing sons of men, the companions of my joy and the sharers of my mortality, my fellow-citizens and fellow-pilgrims,—those who were before me, shall be after me, and are with me,—on the road of life. These are Thy servants, my brethren, whom Thou willest to be Thy sons; my masters, whom Thou orderest me to serve, if I would live with Thee, of Thee. And it would have been little, had Thy Word only bidden me by speaking, and had not also gone before me by doing. This I do, then, both in deed and word, this I do "beneath Thy Wings," in peril too great, were not my soul under Thy Wings subject to Thee, and my weakness known unto Thee. I am but a little child, but my Father ever liveth, and my Protector is sufficient for me; for He is the Same Who begat me, and Who defends me. And Thou Thyself art all my good; Thou, Almighty, Who art with me, yes, before I was with Thee. To such, then, as Thou biddest me serve, will I reveal, not what I was, but what I am now, and what I yet may be. "But neither do I judge myself."[2] In this way, then, I would be heard.

[1] Ps. ii. 11. [2] 1 Cor. iv. 1.

CHAPTER V.

Man knows not himself wholly.

FOR "Thou, Lord, judgest me;" although, indeed, "no man knoweth the things of a man, but the spirit of man which is in him,"[1] yet is there something of man which not even the spirit of man which is in him knows. But Thou, Lord, Who hast made him, knowest the whole of him. But I, though I despise myself in Thy sight, and count myself but "dust and ashes," yet know something of Thee, which I know not of myself. And certainly, "now we see through a glass darkly," not yet "face to face;"[2] and therefore, as long as I am "absent from Thee,"[3] I am more present with myself than with Thee; and yet I know that Thou canst in no way suffer injury; but what temptations I can resist, and what I cannot, I know not. And my hope lies in this, that "Thou art faithful, Who wilt not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able; but wilt with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it."[4] I will confess, then, what I know about myself, and confess also what I know not. And since what I do know of myself, I know through the shining of Thy Light upon me; what also I know not of myself, I know not, only until my "darkness be made as the noonday"[5] in Thy Countenance.

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 11. [2] 1 Cor. xiii. 12. [3] 2 Cor. v. 6.
[4] 1 Cor. x. 13. [5] Is. lviii. 10.

CHAPTER VI.

What he loves, when he loves God; and how God is known from His Creatures.

I HAVE no doubtful, but a sure consciousness that I love Thee, O Lord. Thou hast wounded my heart with Thy word, and I loved Thee. Moreover, "the heaven and the earth and all that therein is," lo, on every side, they call me to love Thee, nor do they cease to call to all "that they may be without excuse." But more loudly "wilt Thou have mercy on whom Thou wilt have mercy, and wilt have compassion on whom Thou hast had compassion;"[1] else to the deaf would heaven and earth tell out Thy praises. But what do I love, when I love Thee? not beauty of body, not harmony of time, not radiance of light—so delightful to our eyes—not sweet melodies of varied strains of music, not the sweet odour of flowers and perfumes and spices, not manna and honey, not limbs suggestive of carnal pleasure—I love not such things as these, when I love my God. And yet, when I love my God, I do love a light, a voice, an odour, a food, and an embrace—the light, voice, odour, food, embrace of my inward man: where there is the inshining into my soul of that which space cannot contain, and where there is sound which time cannot deprive me of, and where there is an unction whose fragrance the air bears not away, and where there is a taste which eating lessens not, and where there is an embrace which no

[1] Rom. i. 20; ix. 15.

satiety ever tears asunder. This is what I love, when I love my God.

And what is this? I questioned the earth, and it said, "I am not He;" and all that is in it confessed the same. I questioned the sea and the depths, and the creeping things which have life, and they replied, "We are not thy God, seek above us." I questioned the blowing winds, and the whole air with its inhabitants replied, "Anaximenes[1] is wrong; I am not God." I questioned the heavens, sun, moon, stars; "Neither are we," say they, "God Whom you seek." And I said to all those things which stand about the doors of my flesh, "Ye have told me of my God, that ye are not He; tell me now something of Him." And they cried out with a loud voice, "He made us."[2] My questioning was the directing of my mind towards them; their beauty, their reply. And I directed my thoughts to myself, and questioned myself, "Who art thou?" And I answered, "A man." And behold in me there are present a body and a soul; the one outward, the other inward. In which of these ought I thence to seek my God? I have already sought Him by means of the body, from earth even to heaven, as far as I could send those messengers, the beams of mine eyes. But the inner is the better part; all bodily messengers report to it as president and judge, the answer of heaven and earth, and of all those things which said, "We are not God, but 'He made us.'" The inward man knows these things through the instrumentality of the outward; I, the inward, knew them; I, I the

[1] Anaximenes died about 504 B.C. He taught that the air was the cause of every created being, and a self-existent divinity.

[2] Ps. c. 3.

mind, through the senses of my body. I questioned the whole fabric of the world about my God; and it replied to me, "I am not He, but 'He made me.'"

Is not this beauty manifest to all whose senses are perfect? Why, then, does it not convey the same truth to all? The animals, small and great, see it, but are unable to interrogate it; because there is no reason set over their senses, to receive from them, as a judge, their messages. But men are able to question, so that "the invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made;"[1] but they are enslaved by their love of them, and so, subject to them, are unable to judge. Neither do these creatures make reply to those who question them, unless they can judge; not that they change their voice, that is, their appearance, because one man sees only, another sees and questions, so as to appear in one light to one man, in another to another; but appearing in the same way to both, it is mute to one, it speaks to the other—yea, it speaks to all; but they alone understand, who compare the utterance received from without with the truth within. For the truth saith to me, "Thy God is neither heaven, nor earth, nor any body." This, their nature declares to him who regards them, "They are a mass; a mass is less in a part than in the whole." Now thou art the better part, to thee I speak, O soul; since thou animatest the mass of my body, giving it life, which no body can give to a body; but Thy God is even the Life of life to thee.

[1] Rom. i. 20.

CHAPTER VII.

God is not found by any corporeal or sensitive Faculty.

WHAT, then, do I love, when I love my God? Who is He, Who is over the head of my soul? By my soul itself will I ascend to Him. I will pass beyond that power, by which I cleave to my body, and fill its fabric with life. Not by that power do I find my God; for then "horse and mule, that have no understanding," might find Him, for the same power animates their bodies and ours. There is another power, not that only by which I animate, but that too whereby I endow with sense my flesh, which the Lord hath formed for me; commanding the eye not to hear, and the ear not to see, but the former to be the instrument of seeing, the latter of hearing; and to each of the other senses, assigning their respective positions and offices, which—diverse as they are—I, the one mind, act by means of them. And I will pass beyond this my power, for horse and mule likewise have it; for they also perceive through the body.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Power of Memory.

I WILL pass, then, beyond this power of my nature, mounting up by degrees unto Him Who made me. And I enter upon the broad fields and vast palaces of my memory, where are the treasures of

countless impressions, imported into it from all sorts of sensible objects. There is laid up every reflection we make—every enlargement, diminution, or variation of those things which the senses have attained to; and whatever else hath been committed and stored up, which oblivion hath not yet absorbed and buried. When I am there, I ask what I will, to be produced, and some things instantly present themselves; others are longer in coming, and have to be drawn out, as it were, from more secret recesses; some rush forward in crowds, and while one thing is sought and inquired for, they spring into the midst as if saying, "Perhaps you want me?" And I brush them with the hand of my heart from the face of my memory, until what I want comes forth to view, and stands out cloudless from its hiding-place. Other things are suggested easily and in unbroken order, as they are sought—those which come first yielding to those which follow, and having thus given place, retire, again to come when I shall wish. And all this takes place when I relate a thing from memory.

There all things are preserved distinctly and in their several kinds, each having obtained an entrance by its own gateway: thus light, and all colours and forms of bodies, entered by the eyes; all kinds of sounds, by the ears; all smells, by the passage of the nose; all tastes, by that of the mouth; and by the sense of feeling in every part of the body, what is hard, what is soft, what is hot or cold, what is smooth or rough, what is heavy or light, whether within or without the body. All these does the great treasure-house of memory, with its mysterious and indescribable recesses, receive; to be recalled and re-presented at

need, each entering it by its own door, and each laid up within it. Nor yet do the things themselves enter; but only the images of the things perceived, are there in readiness for thought to recall them. Which, how they are formed, who can tell, though it is plain enough by which of the senses each particular image is taken in and laid up? For even when I am in the dark and in silence, I can, if I will, in my memory produce colours; and I discern between white and black, and between what other colours I will; nor do sounds break in, and disturb my reflections upon what I have seen, though they also are there, as it were dormant, in their separate repository. For these also are there, ready to be called for. And though my tongue be still, and my throat silent, yet can I sing as I will; and those images of colours which are nevertheless there, do not obtrude themselves and interrupt me, when I am drawing from another treasure, of which the ear was the channel. So of the rest, what has been brought in and gathered together by the different senses, I recall as I please: and I distinguish the sweet odour of the lily from that of the violet, when I am smelling nothing; and I prefer honey to must, smooth to rough, though neither tasting nor touching, but simply remembering.

All this I transact within the vast hall of my memory. For there heaven, and earth, and sea, are present to me, with all things which I could think upon therein, besides what I have forgotten. There also do I meet with myself and reflect upon myself—what, when, and where I have acted, and how I felt when I did a thing. There, are all things which I remember, whether acquired by personal experience,

as it were in wonderful cells, and are wonderfully brought out by the act of remembrance.

CHAPTER X.

Literature is not brought into the Memory by means of the Senses, but is drawn out from its deeper recess.

BUT when I hear that there are three kinds of questions, "whether a thing is," "what it is," "of what quality it is," I retain, indeed, the images of the sounds by which these words are formed, and I know that those sounds passed with a noise through the air and now have ceased. But the things themselves which are signified by those sounds I did not arrive at by any bodily sense, nor did I ever see them except in my mind; and in my memory I stored up not the images of the things, but the things themselves, which, how they entered into me, let them say who can. For I run through all the gateways of my flesh; nor can I discover by which of them they gained admission. For the eyes say, "If they had any colours, we reported them." The ears say, "If they had any sound, we gave tidings of them." The nostrils say, "If they had any smell, it found a passage through us." The sense of taste says, "If they have no flavour, it is useless to ask me." Touch says, "If they have no body, I could not handle it, and what I cannot handle, I cannot give tidings of." Whence, then, and by what means did these things enter into my memory? I know not how. For when I learned them, I did not take them simply from another's convictions; but I

recognised and affirmed their truth in my own mind, and committing them to it, laid them up whence I might produce them when I pleased. There they were, then, even before I had learned them, but they were not in my memory. Where were they then, or why, when they were spoken, did I recognise them, and say, "So it is, it is true;" unless because they were already in my memory, but in so remote and retired a part, as it were, in its more hidden caverns, that unless they had been elicited by the suggestion of another, I might possibly have never thought of them?

CHAPTER XI.

What it is to learn.

WE find, then, to learn such things as these—things of which we do not draw in images through the senses, but which we inwardly perceive without images, as they are by themselves—is nothing else, but by thinking, as it were, to collect those things which the memory before contained on all sides and in disorder; and by application of mind to take care that they, being, as it were, ready at hand in the memory, where before they lay concealed, scattered, and unused, might easily occur to the mind now familiarised with them. And how many of such things does my memory carry about which have been already discovered, and, as I said, placed ready at hand, which we are said to have learned and to have known; which, if for a little time I should cease to recall, they would be again buried, and glide back, as it were, into some more distant recesses, so that they must again, as if new, be sought

out (for they can have no other region), and must be drawn together again that they may be known; that is, they must, as it were, be collected together from a sort of dispersion, whence we have the word "to cogitate." For "I collect" bears the same relation to "I re-collect" as in Latin "ago" bears to "agito" and "facio" to "factito." But the mind has appropriated this word "cogitate" to itself, so that, not that which is collected anyhow, but that which is mentally collected, that is, is brought together, is now properly said to be cogitated upon.

CHAPTER XII.

The Memory of Mathematics.

THE memory also contains countless reasons and rules of numbers and dimensions, none of which were impressed by any bodily sense, for they have neither colour, nor sound, nor smell, nor taste, nor touch. I have heard the sounds of the words by which they are signified when they have been discoursed upon; but these are one thing, and the things are another. For the sounds are different in Greek from what they are in Latin, but the things themselves are neither Greek, nor Latin, nor any other language. I have seen the lines of the craftsman, even the finest, like the spider's web; but these are not the same as those, are not the images of those lines which my bodily eye reports to me: whoever knows them, without any thought whatever of a body, recognises them within him. I have also perceived the numbers of those things by which are counted every bodily sense; but these

which are counted are different from those by which we count, nor are these the images of those, and therefore are these the things themselves. He may laugh at me who does not see the meaning of what I say, and I will grieve for him who laughs at me.

CHAPTER XIII.

By Memory we remember having remembered.

ALL these things in my memory I hold, and how I learned them I hold in memory. The many things also most falsely urged against them I have heard, and retain in my memory; which although they were false, yet it is not false that I have remembered them; and I remember likewise, that I have distinguished between those truths and these falsehoods whereby they were attacked; and I perceive that the present act of discerning between them, is different from those past acts of discerning between them which I remember often took place when I thought of them. Therefore also I remember to have often understood these things; and what I now discern and understand, I lay up in my memory, that afterwards I may remember that I now understood it. Then also I remember that I remembered; and the fact that I now am able to remember these things, if I shall recall it, by this very power of memory, I shall recall it.

CHAPTER XIV.

How Memory retains the Affections of the Mind. How without the present Feeling of Joy, Joys can be recalled.

THE memory likewise retains the affections of my mind; not in the same way in which the mind itself has them, when it experiences them, but in a far different manner, which is proper to itself. For I without being joyful, remember that I rejoiced; and without being sorrowful, remember that I sorrowed; I recall, not now fearing, that I sometimes feared; and without present desire, I am mindful that I desired some time ago. Sometimes, on the contrary, I find joy in the remembrance of a past sorrow, and sadness in remembering a past joy; which is not to be wondered at, when the body is involved, for the mind is one thing, the body another. Therefore, if with joy I recall some past bodily pain, there is nothing marvellous. But here, when the memory itself is the mind—for if we charge any one to remember something, we say, "See that you bear it in mind;" and when we forget, we say, "It did not occur to my mind," and, "It escaped my mind," thus calling the memory, mind—when the memory is itself the mind, how can it be, that when I with joyfulness remember past sorrow, the mind has joy and the memory sorrow,—the mind from the joyfulness which is in it has joy, but the memory from the sadness which is in it, is not sad? Perhaps, then, the memory is not a part of the mind? *who* will say this? For the memory is the very belly of

the mind, and joy and sadness are, as it were, its sweet and bitter food; which, when they are committed to the memory, are, so to speak, passed into the stomach, where they can be retained, but can have no taste. It is ridiculous to make such a comparison, yet these things are not wholly unlike.

But behold, I draw upon my memory, when I say, there are four passions of the mind, viz. desire, joy, fear, and sorrow; and whatever on these I can say, by dividing each into its subordinate kinds, and by defining it, in my memory I must find and from it produce all the arguments I make use of: yet, however, am I not disturbed by any of those passions, when, by calling them to mind, I remember them; and before I brought them to my remembrance and surveyed them, they were there; therefore, then, by remembering, they could be drawn forth. Perhaps, then, as some animals chew the cud, so by remembering are things brought up again from the memory. Why, then, is there not tasted by the disputant, that is, by the one who remembers, in the mouth of his thought the sweetness of joy, or the bitterness of sorrow? Is the comparison unlike in this respect, because it does not hold good in all? For who would be willing to speak of such things, if as often as we named sorrow or fear, we were obliged to experience sorrow or fear. And yet we could make no mention of these things, unless in our memory we found not only the sounds of the names according to the images which the bodily senses had imprinted, but also notions of the things themselves, which by no gateway of the flesh we had received, but which the mind itself through the experience of its own passions perceived, and committed to

the memory, or the memory itself retains though not committed to its trust.

CHAPTER XV.

Memory retains Things also which are absent.

BUT whether by images or not, who can easily say? Thus, I name a stone, I name the sun, when these things are not present to my senses; in my memory, indeed, their images are present. I name a bodily pain, when I no longer feel it; yet unless the image of it were present in my memory, I should not know how to speak of it, nor could I, if questioned about it, distinguish it from pleasure. I name bodily health; when in bodily health, the thing itself is present to me; but unless the image of it were present in my memory, I could in no way recollect what idea this sound should convey to me. Nor would those who are ill know what was spoken of, when health was mentioned, were not the same image by the power of memory retained, although the thing itself were absent from the body. I name numbers by which we reckon; lo, they are present in my memory—themselves, not merely their images. I name the image of the sun, and it is present in my memory. For I do not recall the image of its image; the image itself is present to me remembering. I name memory, I recognise what I name. And where do I recognise it, save in the memory itself? Is it, then, present to itself by its image, and not by itself?

CHAPTER XVI.

And Forgetfulness itself can be remembered.

WHAT, when I name forgetfulness, and also recognise what I name? whence should I recognise it, unless by the exercise of memory? I do not refer to the sound of the name, but to its signification; which, if I were to forget, I should not be able to recognise what the sound meant. When, then, I remember memory, memory itself is present, by itself, to itself; but when I remember forgetfulness, both memory is present to me and forgetfulness—memory, whereby I remember, and forgetfulness, which I remember. But what is forgetfulness but the privation of memory? How, then, is it present that I should remember it, seeing that when it is present I am unable to remember. But whatever we remember, we retain in the memory; yet, unless we remembered forgetfulness, we should by no means be able to recognise what was meant when we heard the word; forgetfulness, then, is retained in the memory. It is present, then, lest we forget it; and when it is present, we forget. Is it therefore to be understood that forgetfulness is present to the memory, when we remember it, not by itself, but by its image? Because, if forgetfulness were present through itself, it would cause us not to remember, but to forget. And who, I pray you, can find this out? Who shall comprehend how this is?

O Lord, I indeed am toiling herein, yes, toiling in myself; I am become to myself a land of hardness and of excessive sweat.[1] For we are not now investigating

[1] Gen. iii. 17.

the tracts of heaven, nor are we measuring the distances of the stars, nor inquiring into the gravity of the earth. It is I who remember,—I, the mind. It would not be so wonderful, if something not myself were beyond my reach. But what is nearer to me than myself? And behold, the power of my own memory is not comprehended by me, though I cannot name myself without making use of it. For what shall I say, when I am quite sure that I remember forgetfulness? Shall I say that what I remember is not in my memory? or shall I say that forgetfulness is in my memory to prevent my forgetting? Either of these is most absurd. What third course is there? How can I say that the image of forgetfulness is found in my memory when I remember it, not forgetfulness itself? How can I say this, when, for the image of anything to be imprinted on the memory, it is necessary that the thing itself should first be present, whence the image is able to be imprinted? For thus I remember Carthage, thus I remember all places where I have been, thus men's faces whom I have seen, and the messages of the other senses, thus I remember a pain of the body or a sickness. When these were present, the memory took the images of things which I might behold when present, and reflect upon in my mind and bring back when absent. If, then, by its image and not by itself, forgetfulness is retained in the memory, itself must have been present some time that its image might be received. But when it was present, how did it write its image on the memory, seeing that what it finds already traced there, by its very presence, forgetfulness effaces? And yet, however it may be, though it be after some incomprehensible and indescribable manner, I am sure that I

remember forgetfulness itself also, whereby what we remember is buried.

CHAPTER XVII.

Great is the Power of Memory, but we must go beyond it to attain to God.

GREAT is the power of memory, inconceivably wonderful, O my God, profound and infinite in its manifoldness; and this thing is the mind, and I am myself it. What, then, am I, my God? what is my nature? A life various, multiform, and of exceeding vastness. Behold, in the plains, and caves, and caverns of my memory, countless and full of numberless kinds of things, either through images, as of all bodies; or through the presence of the things themselves, as of the arts; or through I know not what notions or observations, as of the affections of the mind, which even, when the mind does not suffer, the memory retains, whereas whatever is in the memory, is also in the mind: through all these I run hither and thither, and flit about; I dive down here and there, as far as I can, and never reach the bottom. So great is the power of memory; so great the power of life, in this mortal life of man! What, then, shall I do, O Thou my true Life, my God? I will transcend even this power of mine which is called memory, I will pass beyond it, that I may attain to Thee, sweet Light. What sayest Thou to me? Behold, I am soaring up by my mind to Thee, Who abidest above me. I will transcend even this my power which is called memory,—eager to reach Thee whence Thou canst be reached, and to cleave

to Thee whence one may cleave. For even beasts and birds have memory; otherwise they could not return to their dens or nests, nor do many other things they are accustomed to; neither could they become accustomed to anything, unless through their memory. I will pass, then, beyond memory, that I may attain to Him Who has separated me from four-footed beasts and the fowls of the air, by giving me more wisdom. I will pass even beyond memory, and where, then, shall I find Thee, O really good and secure Sweetness? If I find Thee beyond my memory, I do not have Thee in remembrance. And how now shall I find Thee, if I have Thee not in remembrance?

CHAPTER XVIII.

A Thing lost could not be found, unless it were retained in the Memory.

FOR the woman who lost her coin,[1] and searched for it with a light, had she not remembered it, would never have sought for it. For how, when it was found, would she have known that it was the same, had she no remembrance of it? I remember that I have lost and found many things; and how do I know this, but that when I was seeking any of them, and was asked, "Is this it?" "Is that it?" I continued to reply, "No," until that was produced which I sought. Of which had I no remembrance (whatever it might be), even if it were presented to me, I should not find it, for I should not recognise it. And this always takes place, when we seek and find something which we had lost.

[1] Luke xv. 8.

Yet, however, if anything perchance is lost from the sight, not from the memory, as any visible body, its image is retained within, and it is sought until it is brought back to sight; and when it is found, it is recognised by its correspondence with the image within. Neither can we say that we have found what we had lost, unless we recognise it; nor can we recognise it, unless we remember it. But this was lost only to sight, but was kept in the memory.

CHAPTER XIX.

What is it to remember?

BUT what if the memory itself lose anything, which is what takes place when we forget and try to recollect? Where, indeed, do we search, but in the memory itself? And there, if perhaps one thing instead of another presents itself, we reject it, until the one we are seeking occurs; and then we say, "This is it;" which we should not say unless we recognised it, nor recognise it unless we remembered it. Certainly, therefore, we had forgotten it. Or was it, that the whole had not escaped us, but a part remained, through which we gained the other part we were seeking; because the memory was conscious that it did not put together all that it was wont, and maimed, as it were, by the mutilation of its wonted operation, demanded the restoration of what was wanting? Thus, if we think of or see some one we know, and having forgotten his name, endeavour to recall it; whatever other name occurs has no association with him, because we were not wont to think of it in relation to him, and conse-

CHAPTER XXI.

How Memory retains the Happy Life.

BUT would he remember it, as one would remember Carthage who had seen it? No; for a happy life is not seen by the eye, because it is not a body. Would he remember it, as we remember numbers? No; for he who has these in his knowledge, seeks no further to attain them: but we have in our knowledge a happy life, and therefore we love it, and yet we wish to obtain it in order to be happy. Would he, then, remember it, as we remember eloquence? No; for although when the name is uttered, some recall the thing who are still not yet eloquent, and many who desire to become so, whence it appears that there is in them some knowledge of it; yet these have with their bodily senses observed eloquence in others, and have derived pleasure from it, and thus desire to become eloquent themselves (though they would derive no pleasure, had they not some inward knowledge of it, nor wish to be eloquent, unless they were delighted); but a happy life, by no sense of the body, can be discerned in others. Do we remember it, then, as we remember joy? Perhaps so; for my joy I can remember even when sad, as a happy life I can remember when I am wretched. Nor ever by any sense of the body did I see, or hear, or smell, or taste, or touch my joy; but I experienced it in my mind, when I rejoiced, and the notion of it clung to my memory; so that I can remember it sometimes with contempt, sometimes with desire, according to the particular kind of object at

which I remember to have rejoiced. For even from foul objects have I been pervaded with a sort of joy, which now remembering, I detest and abominate; different is it concerning good and proper objects, which I recall with longing, although haply no longer near, and therefore with sadness I recall by-gone joy.

Where then, and when, did I experience my happy life, that I should recall it, and love and desire it? Not I only, or with a few others, but all indeed wish to be happy; which unless with a certain knowledge we knew, we should not with so certain a will wish it. But how is it, if any one were to ask two persons, whether they would like to serve as soldiers, one, perhaps, would answer "Yes" and the other "No;" but if they were asked whether they wished to be happy, both would immediately reply without the slightest hesitation, that they desired it; and for the same reason, one would wish to enlist, and the other not, namely, that they might be happy? Or is it, perhaps, that, as one finds delight in this, another in that, all agree in their desire to be happy, as they would agree, if they were questioned, that they wanted to have joy, and it is this joy which they call a happy life? Although, then, one finds joy in this, another in that, all have but one aim in view, and that is, to rejoice! This, then, being a thing which all men at some time have experienced, therefore being found in the memory, it is recognised, when the name of a happy life is heard.[1]

[1] S. Augustine uses "Beata Vita" for "the happy life" throughout. This "happiness" is defined "the absence of all evils, and the cumulative assemblage of all goods, and is to be found in God." It is not the mere happiness of "Hedonism."

but joy in the truth; unless the truth is so loved, that whoever loves something else, wants that which they love to be the truth, and because they are unwilling to be deceived, are unwilling to be convinced that they are imposed on? Therefore do they hate the truth, for the sake of that thing which they love instead of it. They love truth when it shines; hate it, when it rebukes. For because they are unwilling to be deceived, and will to deceive, they love the truth when it manifests itself: when it manifests them, they hate it. But they shall justly be repaid, for truth will make manifest those who would fain be hidden, and will not be manifested itself to them. Thus, thus then, thus does the human mind, so very blind and weak, so foul and unseemly, wish to remain hidden, yet wishes that nothing be hid from it. The contrary happens to it; —that itself should not escape the truth, but that the truth is hid from it. Yet even thus, whilst miserable, it prefers to rejoice in truth than in falsehood. It will be happy then, when, without any intervening impediment, it shall rejoice in that One Truth by Which all things are true.

CHAPTER XXIV.

He rejoices that God has a place in his Memory.

BEHOLD, how I have roamed in my memory, seeking Thee, O Lord; and I have not found Thee, without it. Nor have I found anything concerning Thee, but what I had remembered from the time I learned Thee. For from the time I learned Thee, I have not forgotten Thee. For where found I truth,

there I found my God, the Truth Itself; Which, from the time I learned, I have not forgotten. And thus, from the time I learned Thee, Thou remainest in my memory, and therein I find Thee, when I remember Thee and delight in Thee. These are my holy delights, which Thou in Thy Mercy hast vouchsafed to me, regarding my destitution.

CHAPTER XXV.

In what part of his Memory God is found.

BUT where dost Thou remain in my memory, O Lord, where therein remainest Thou? What place of rest hast Thou found for Thyself? Thou hast bestowed this honour upon my memory, to abide in it; but in what part of it—this I am considering. For when I recall Thee, I soar beyond those parts of it which I have in common with the beasts, because I found Thee not amongst the images of bodily things; and I came to those parts of it to which I committed the affections of my mind, neither there did I find Thee. And I entered into the very seat of my mind, which it has in my memory, for my mind also remembers itself—nor wert Thou there: for as Thou art not a bodily image, nor an affection of a living being—as when we rejoice, sorrow, desire, fear, remember, forget, and the like, so neither art Thou the mind itself, because Thou art the Lord God of the mind; and all these things are changed, but Thou remainest unchangeable over all, and yet hast deigned to dwell in my memory, from the time I learned Thee. And do I ask in what part of it Thou dwellest, as if

indeed there were places in it? Thou dost surely dwell in it, for I have remembered Thee ever since I learned Thee, and in it I find Thee when I call Thee to mind.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Where God is found.

WHERE, then, did I find Thee, that I might learn Thee? For Thou wert not already in my memory, before that I learned Thee. Where, then, did I find Thee, that I might learn Thee, but in Thyself above me? Place is nowhere; and we go backward and forward, and yet there is not place. Thou, the Truth, everywhere dost preside over all who consult Thee, and respondest to all at once, however diverse their questions may be. Clearly dost Thou answer, though all do not clearly hear. All consult Thee upon whatever they please, but do not always hear what they like. He waits on thee to most purpose, who does not so much look to hear from Thee what accords with his wishes, as to bring his wishes into accord with what he hears from Thee.

CHAPTER XXVII.

How the Beauty of God attracts Man.

TOO late have I loved Thee, Beauty so ancient, and so new! Too late have I loved Thee! And behold, Thou wert within, and I without, and without I sought Thee; and I, deformed, ran after those forms of beauty which Thou hast made. Thou wast with

me, and I was not with Thee. Those things held me back from Thee, which could have no being but in Thee. Thou calledst, Thou criedst, and Thou breakest through my deafness. Thou flashedst, thou shinedst, and Thou chasedst away my blindness. Thou didst become fragrant, and I drew in my breath, and panted after Thee. I tasted, and I hunger and thirst. Thou touchedst me, and I burned for Thy embrace.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Miseries of this Life.

WHEN I shall cleave to Thee with my whole being, I shall have no more sorrow and labour; and my life shall be a living life, all full of Thee. But now, seeing that all whom Thou fillest, Thou liftest up; I being not full of Thee, am a burden to myself. Sorrowful joys contend with joyous sorrows; and which will conquer, I know not. Ah me! Lord, have mercy upon me! My evil sorrows contend with my good joys; and which will conquer, I know not. Ah me! Lord, have mercy upon me! Alas! Look, I do not hide my wounds; Thou art the Physician, I the sick man; Thou art merciful, I am miserable. "Is not the life of man on earth all temptation?"[1] Who is there who likes troubles and difficulties? Thou orderest them to be endured, not to be loved. No one loves what he endures, though he loves to endure. For

[1] Job vii. 1. This is the Old Vulgate rendering of Job vii. 1. In the English Bible it is, "Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?" The present Vulgate is, "Militia est vita hominis super terram?"

though he may be glad to bear, he would rather there were nothing to be borne. In adversity, I desire prosperity; in prosperity, I fear adversity. What middle place is there between them, where "the life of man is not temptation"? Woe unto the prosperity of the world, once and again, from fear of adversity, and corruption of joy! Woe to the adversity of the world, once and again and a third time, from the desire of prosperity, and because adversity itself is a hard thing, and lest it subdue patience! Is not, then, "the life of man on earth one temptation" without intermission?

CHAPTER XXIX.

All Hope is in God.

AND my whole hope is in nothing but in Thy exceeding great Mercy. Grant what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt. Thou enjoinest upon us continency. And "when I knew," saith a certain one, "that no one can be continent unless God should grant it, this also was a point of wisdom to know Whose gift it was."[1] By continency, we are re-collected and gathered back into One, from Whence we have floated away into many. For he loves Thee too little who loves something else with Thee, which he loves not for Thee. O Love, Who ever burnest and art never consumed! O Charity, my God, inflame me! Thou commandest continency, grant me what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt.

[1] Wisd. viii. 21.

CHAPTER XXX.

He confesses his present Condition as to Carnal Desire.

THOU commandest, indeed, that I should restrain myself from the lust of the flesh, and from the lust of the eyes, and from the ambition of the world.[1] Thou hast forbidden concubinage; and as to marriage itself, Thou hast counselled something better than that which Thou hast permitted. And because Thou hast granted it, it was observed, even before I became a dispenser of Thy Sacrament. But still there live in my memory (of which I have spoken so much) the images of such things, as my habits have fixed there; and these rise up before me, lacking indeed their old power, when I am awake; but in sleep they present themselves not only so far as to call forth pleasure but also consent, and very like reality. Yes, so far has the illusion of the image power over my soul and my flesh, that, when asleep, imaginations carry with them more force than realities when I am awake. Am I not at that time myself, O Lord my God? And yet how great difference is there between myself and myself, in the moment when I pass from waking to sleeping, or return from sleeping to waking! Where, then, is the reason which resists such suggestions when I am awake? And if the things themselves are borne in upon it, it remains unshaken. Is it, then, closed with the eyes? is it lulled to sleep, with the senses of the body? But how is it, then, in sleep we often resist, and mindful of our reso-

[1] 1 John ii. 16.

lution, we hold to it most chastely, and give no assent to such allurements? And yet so much difference there is, that when it happens otherwise, on waking we may return to peace of conscience; and by this same difference we discover that we have not done that, which however to our sorrow should in some way have been done in us.

Art not Thou able, O Omnipotent God, to heal all the diseases of my soul, and Thy more abundant Grace to keep my body from all "the motions of sins,"[1] whilst I rest? Thou wilt increase in me more and more Thy Gifts, that my soul may follow me to Thee, freed from the bird-lime of concupiscence; that it may not rebel against itself, and even unconsciously not only not be led into incontinency, the defilements of corruption, through sensual imaginations, but that it may not even consent to an evil thought. For that nothing of this kind should affect, in the least degree, even in the degree which a mere nod may restrain, the chaste affection even of one asleep, not only some time in life but even at my present age, is no great thing for the Almighty, Who is "able to do above all that we ask or think."[2] Yet now, what I still am in this form of evil I have declared to my good Lord; "rejoicing with trembling"[3] in that which Thou hast bestowed on me, and grieving for that wherein I am still incomplete; hoping that Thou wilt perfect Thy Mercies in me, even to the abundance of peace, which both my inward and outward being shall have with Thee, when "death is swallowed up in victory."[4]

[1] Rom. vii. 5.
[2] Eph. iii. 20.
[3] Ps. ii. 11.
[4] 1 Cor. xv. 54.

CHAPTER XXXI.

How he is, in regard to the Temptations to Gluttony.

THERE is another "evil of the day," which would that it were "sufficient"[1] for it, for we repair the daily decays of the body by eating and drinking, until Thou "destroyest both the meats and the belly,"[2] when Thou shalt kill my hunger with a wondrous fulness, and shalt clothe "this corruptible with incorruption"[3] eternal. But now sweet is this necessity to me, and against this sweetness do I contend, lest I be taken captive by it; and I carry on a daily conflict by fastings, often "bringing my body into subjection;"[4] and my pains are driven away with pleasure. For hunger and thirst are forms of pain; they burn and consume like a fever, unless the medicine of nourishment bring relief. Which, seeing that it is at hand through the consolation of Thy gifts, which land and water and air supply for our infirmity, our calamities are called delights.

This Thou hast taught me, that I should resort to food as a medicine. But when I am passing from the pain of emptiness to the contentment of fulness, in the passage itself the snare of concupiscence lies in wait for me. For the transition itself is pleasure, and no other way is there of passing thither, whither necessity impels us to pass. And whilst health is the reason for eating and drinking, a dangerous delight accompanies it as an attendant, which oftentimes tries to go

[1] Matt. vi. 34.
[2] 1 Cor. vi. 13.
[3] 1 Cor. xv. 54.
[4] 1 Cor. ix. 27.

before it, in order that I may do for its sake what I say or wish to do for health's sake. Nor are both alike as to quantity; for what is enough for health is too little for delight. And often it is difficult to determine, whether it be the necessary care of the body which seeks a further supply, or whether the deceptive craving for enjoyment is offering its services. In this uncertainty, the unhappy soul becomes merry, and therein prepares to shelter itself under an excuse, glad that what is sufficient for the moderation of health is not quite evident, so that under the cloak of health it may hide the working of pleasure. These temptations do I daily try to resist, and I invoke Thy Right Hand to help me, and refer to Thee my anxieties, for as yet my resolution in this matter does not hold its ground.

I hear the Voice of my God commanding, "Let not your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness."[1] "Drunkenness" is far from me; Thou wilt have mercy, that it may not approach me. But "surfeiting" sometimes has stolen upon Thy servant; Thou wilt have mercy, that it may be removed far from me. For "no one can be continent unless Thou grant it."[2] Many things, when we pray, Thou bestowest on us; and whatever good we received before we prayed, we received from Thee. I never was a drunkard, yet drunkards too I have known made sober by Thee. It was then from Thee, that they who were not such should not be so, as it was Thy doing, that they who have been so might not always remain so; and it was Thy doing also, that both might know from Whom it was. I have also heard another Voice of Thine, "Go not after thy lusts, and turn away from thy pleasure."[3]

[1] Luke xxi. 34. [2] Wisd. viii. 21. [3] Ecclus. xviii. 30.

I have heard likewise, that which of Thy gift I much delighted in, "Neither if we eat, shall we abound; nor if we eat not, shall we lack."[1] That is to say, neither shall the one make me plentiful, nor the other miserable. I have heard also Thy Voice again, saying, "For I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content; I know how to abound, and how to suffer need. I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me."[2] Behold a soldier of the heavenly camp, and not such dust as we are. But remember, Lord, that we are dust,[3] and that "of dust Thou hast made man;"[4] and "he was lost, and is found."[5] Nor could he do this in his own strength, because he, saying this through the breath of Thy inspiration, whom so loved, was of the same dust. "I can," saith he, "do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me." Strengthen me, that I also may be able. Give me what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt. He confesses that he has received, and when "he glories, he glories in the Lord."[6] I have heard another, praying that he might receive. "Take away from me," saith he, "the greediness of the belly."[7] Whence it appears, O my holy God, that when that is done which Thou orderest to be done, it is only through Thy gift.

Thou hast taught me, O good Father, that "to the pure all things are pure;"[8] but that "it is evil to the man who eateth with offence;" and "that every creature of Thine is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving;"[9] and that "meat

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 8.
[2] Phil. iv. 11-13.
[3] Ps. ciii. 14.
[4] Gen. iii. 19.
[5] Luke xv. 24, 32.
[6] 1 Cor. i. 30, 31.
[7] *Ecclus. xxiii. 6.*
[8] Rom. xiv. 20.
[9] 1 Tim. iv. 4.

commendeth us not to God;"[1] and that "no man should judge us in meat or in drink;"[2] and that "he that eateth, let him not despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth."[3] These things have I learned, thanks be to Thee, praise be to Thee, my God, my Master, Who knockest at the door of my ears, and enlightenest my heart; deliver me from all temptation. I fear not the uncleanness of meats, but the uncleanness of desire. I know that Noah[4] was permitted to eat every kind of flesh which was fit for food; that Elias[5] was fed with flesh; that John,[6] endued with wonderful self-restraint, was not polluted by the living creatures, that is, the locusts on which he fed. And I know that Esau[7] was ensnared by a longing for lentiles, and that David[8] blamed himself for desiring water, and that our King was tempted not concerning flesh but concerning bread.[9] And therefore also the people in the desert deserved to be reproved, not because they desired flesh, but because, in consequence of their desire for meat, they murmured against the Lord.[10]

Placed, then, amidst these temptations, I strive daily against the irregular desires of eating and drinking; for it is not the sort of thing I can determine to cut off once and for all, and not touch it afterwards, as I

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 8. [2] Col. ii. 16. [3] Rom. xiv. 3.
[4] Gen. ix. 2, 3. [5] 1 Kings xvii. 6. [6] Matt. iii. 4.
[7] Gen. xxv. 34. [8] 2 Sam. xxiii. 15-17. [9] Matt. iv. 3.
[10] Num. xi. Christians were forbidden to make use of blood as food in the earliest times. But S. Augustine, arguing against Faustus, maintained the Apostolic decree (Acts xv. 20), "that they abstain from . . . things strangled and from blood," to be temporary only. Flesh was permitted to be eaten "with faith *and* reverence," if the blood was poured out.

could in the case of concubinage. The reins of the throat, then, have to be held with a moderation,—neither too loosely nor too tightly. And who is there, O Lord, who is not carried away a little beyond the bounds of necessity? Whoever he is, he is great; and let him magnify Thy Name. But I am not he, for I am a sinful man. But yet I too magnify Thy Name; and He "maketh intercession" to Thee[1] for my sins—He Who "overcame the world,"[2] numbering me amongst the weak members of His Body,[3] because "Thine Eyes have seen that which is imperfect, and in Thy Book all shall be written."[4]

CHAPTER XXXII.

Now, with regard to the Charms of Perfumes.

WITH the enticement of sweet odours I am not much concerned. When they are absent, I do not miss them; when they are present, I do not eschew them, yet I am ready always to be without them. This is how it seems to be with me; perhaps I am deceived. For that darkness also is to be lamented, in which I cannot discern what capacity I possess, so that my mind, inquiring into herself of her own powers, finds it not easy to give credit to herself; because even that which is in it, is mostly concealed, until it is revealed by experience. And no one ought to be sure in such a life, which is throughout called "a temptation,"[5] that he who could be made better from worse, may not also from better become

[1] Rom. viii. 34. [2] John xvi. 33. [3] 1 Cor. xii. 22.
[4] Ps. cxxxix. 16. [5] Job vii. 1, V.

worse. Our one hope, only confidence, only security, is Thy Mercy.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

How, with regard to the Pleasures of the Ear.

THE pleasures of the ear had more firmly entangled and captivated me; but Thou hast broken these bonds, and set me at liberty. Now in those melodies which Thy words breathe life into, when they are sung with a sweet and trained voice, I confess, I take some satisfaction; yet not so as to be held fast by them, but so as to rise when I will. However, coming as they do, with the words which are their life, that they may gain admission into me, they seek in my affections a place of some dignity, and I find it difficult to assign them a fitting one. Sometimes, indeed, I seem to myself to bestow on them more honour than is proper, when I feel our minds to be more piously and fervently kindled into a flame of devotion, by the holy words themselves when they are thus sung, than when they are not so sung; and that all the affections of our spirit, according to their sweet diversity, have their corresponding measures in the voice and singing, which are excited by I know not what occult relationship. But the gratification of my flesh, which ought not to be allowed to enervate the soul, oftentimes beguiles me, while the sense does not so wait upon reason as to follow it patiently; but having gained admission merely for its own sake, it strives to forerun it and to take the lead. Thus in these things I sin unconsciously, and afterwards I am conscious of it.

But sometimes avoiding over-anxiously this very

snare, I err by too great strictness; and sometimes so greatly, as to wish that every melody of those sweet tunes which are often used to David's Psalter were banished from my ears, and from the Church itself; and that seemed a safer course to me, which I remember to have been often told me of Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, who made the reader of the psalm to intone it with so slight an inflection of the voice, that it bordered on reading more than singing. But yet, when I recall my tears, which I poured forth at the songs of Thy Church in the very outset of my recovered faith, and how now I am touched, not merely with the singing, but with the things sung, when they are sung with a clear voice and most suitable modulation, I acknowledge again the great utility of this practice. Thus I fluctuate between the danger of gratifying oneself, and the experience of profiting; being drawn rather (though not as pronouncing a decided opinion) to approve the custom of singing in the Church, that so by the delights of the ear the weaker soul may rise to the affection of devotion. Yet, when it happens to me to be more touched by the singing than by what is sung, I confess that I sin penally; in that case I would rather not hear the singing. Behold now my state; weep with me, and weep for me, ye who so rule your inner being as that good results follow. As for you who do not so act, these things will be of no consequence to you. But Thou, O Lord my God, hearken; behold and see, and have mercy and heal me[1]—Thou, in Whose sight "I have become a riddle to myself," and "this is my own infirmity."[2]

[1] Ps. vi. 2. [2] Ps. lxxvii. 10.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

How he is, in reference to the Allurements of the Eyes.

THERE remains the pleasure of these eyes of my flesh, concerning which I now utter my confessions which the ears of Thy Temple hear,—those brotherly and kind ears; and so to include the temptations of the "lust of the flesh," which still agitate me, groaning and "desiring to be clothed upon with my house which is from heaven."[1] The eyes love fair and varied forms, bright and pleasant colours. Let not these things take hold of my mind; let God possess it, "Who made" these things "very good"[2] indeed; but He is my Good, not they. And these are in contact with me during all the hours I am awake, nor am I given any rest by them; as I am by melodious voices, which sometimes subside altogether into silence. For the light, the queen itself of colours, pervading all things which we see, wherever I may be through the day, in its manifold undulations, soothes me when I am working at anything, and not observing it. And so greatly does it insinuate itself, that if it be suddenly withdrawn, it is longingly sought for; and if it be long absent, the mind is saddened.

O Light which Tobias[3] saw, when, with his own eyes closed, he taught his son the way of life, and went before him with the feet of charity, never making a false step. Or again, which Isaac[4] saw, his fleshly

[1] 2 Cor. v. 2.
[2] Gen. i. 31.
[3] Tobit iv.
[4] Gen. xxvii.

eyes being heavy and dim with age, when he was enabled, not discerning them, to bless his sons, but in blessing them discerned them. Or that which Jacob[1] saw, when he, also blind with great age, with illumined heart, in his sons, threw light upon the different tribes of the future people, pre-signified by them; and laid his hands, mysteriously crossed, upon his grandchildren by Joseph, not as their father outwardly willed to see them placed, but as he inwardly discerned. This is the light, the one light, and one are all who see and love it. But that material light of which I was speaking, with a seductive and dangerous sweetness, seasons this world's life for its blind lovers. But those who know how to praise Thee for it, take it up in Thy hymn, "O God, Whose creatures all things are,"[2] and are not taken up with it in their sleep. Such would I be. I resist the seductions of the eyes, lest my feet, by which I walk in Thy way, should be entangled; and I lift up to Thee invisible eyes, that Thou wouldest "pluck my feet out of the net."[3] Thou dost continually pluck them out, for they are often entrapped. Thou ceasest not to pluck them out, but I often stick fast in the snares, laid for me on every side; for "Thou that keepest Israel shalt neither slumber nor sleep."[4]

How innumerable are the things, made by divers arts and manufactures, in garments, shoes, vessels, and all sorts of contrivances, in pictures also, and various images, and these going far beyond what is necessary

[1] Gen. xlviii. xlix.

[2] The first line of a hymn of S. Ambrose which was sung a the beginning of the night.

[3] Ps. xxv. 15.

[4] Ps. cxxi. 4.

for use, and what is moderate and of pious significancy, have men added to the seductions of the eyes, following outwardly what they make, forsaking inwardly Him by Whom they were made, and effacing that which they themselves were made! But I, my God, and my Beauty, do herein also sing to Thee, and sacrifice praise to my Sanctifier, because those beautiful conceptions which are conveyed through men's souls into the hands of the artificer, spring from that Beauty Which is above souls, and for Which my soul day and night sigheth. But the makers and followers of those outward beauties from thence derive their rule of appreciating them, but do not from thence draw their rule of using them. And there He is, and they see Him not, so that they might stop there, and "keep their strength for Thee,"[1] and not squander it on wearisome delights. I, however, while I say and perceive all this, yet have my steps entangled with these beauties, but Thou, O Lord, pluckest me out, Thou pluckest me out; "because Thy loving-kindness is before my eyes."[2] For I am miserably caught, and Thou pluckest me mercifully out of the snare; sometimes unconsciously, when I have but lightly stepped on it; at other times with sorrow, because I had stuck fast in it.

CHAPTER XXXV.

What is his Condition as to the Second Branch of Temptation, that of Curiosity.

TO this there is added another form of temptation, in manifold ways dangerous. For besides the

[1] Ps. lviii. 10, V. [2] Ps. xxvi. 3.

lust of the flesh, which consists in the delight of all the senses and pleasures, in which its slaves, who put themselves far from Thee, perish; there is in the soul, through the selfsame senses of the body, a certain vain and curious desire, disguised under the name of knowledge and learning, a desire, not for taking delight in the flesh, but for making discoveries by means of the flesh. This, having its origin in the appetite for knowledge, and—as the eyes stand first amongst the organs of sense whereby knowledge is acquired—is called in Divine language "the lust of the eyes."[1] For seeing belongs properly to the eyes; yet we use the term also of the other senses, when we exert them for the attainment of knowledge. But we do not say, Hear how red it is; or, Smell how it shines; or, Taste how it glitters; or, Feel how it radiates; for all these things are said to be seen. Yet we say not only, See how it shines, which the eyes alone can perceive; but also, See how it sounds, see how it smells, see how it tastes, see how hard it is. And thus the general experience of the senses, as it has been said, is called "the lust of the eyes;" because the office of seeing, which is the prerogative of the eye, is by a sort of similitude adopted by the other senses, when they are used in gaining knowledge concerning anything.

Now from this it is clearly evident, when pleasure and when curiosity is sought by the senses; for pleasure is intent upon objects which are beautiful, melodious, fragrant, relishing, smooth;[2] but curiosity

[1] 1 John ii. 16.

[2] "It is to explain the true cause of visual beauty that I call in the assistance of the other senses. If it appears that smoothness is a principal cause of pleasure to the touch, taste, smell,

rescued by them when Thou condemnest. But when it is not "the sinner who is praised in the desires of his soul," nor "one who does wickedly that is blessed,"[1] but a man is praised for some gift which Thou hast given him, and he rejoices more at the praise to himself than that he has the gift for which he is praised, such an one is praised whilst Thou blamest; and better is he who praises him than he who is praised. For the one delighted in the gift of God in man, the other rather in the gift of man than of God.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

How he is moved by Human Praise.

BY these temptations, O Lord, we are daily tried; without cessation we are tempted. Our daily "furnace" is the "human tongue."[2] And in this form of it also Thou commandest continence. Give what Thou orderest, and order what Thou wilt. Concerning this matter, Thou knowest the groaning of my heart to Thee, and the rivers of my eyes. For I cannot easily gather how I may be purer of this plague, and I fear much my "secret faults,"[3] which Thine Eyes know, but mine do not. For I have in other kinds of temptations some sort of power of examining myself, but in this hardly any. For both in regard to the lusts of the flesh and an idle curiosity, I know how much way I have made in restraining my mind, when I do without them, either by choice or from their absence. For then I ask myself, how much more or less trouble I feel through not having them. And as for

[1] Ps. x. 3, V. [2] Prov. xxvii. 21. [3] Ps. xix. 12.

riches, which are sought on account of this, that they may minister to some one of the three lusts, or to two, or to all of them, if the mind cannot discern, whilst they are possessed, whether it despises them, by parting with them it can make that discovery. But that we may be without praise, and test ourselves as to what we should do then, we must live a bad life, and that in so abandoned and dreadful a manner, as that no one should know us without detesting us! What greater madness could be said or thought of? But if the accompaniment of a good life and of good works is necessarily and rightly praise, we must not forego a good life itself, in order to be free from its accompaniment. Yet I cannot test myself, whether I should get on well or ill without anything, unless it be absent.

What, then, do I confess to Thee, O Lord, in this kind of temptation? What, but that I am delighted with praises; but with truth itself more than with praises? For if it were proposed to me, whether I would rather, being mad and entertaining false notions about everything, be praised by all men, or, being consistent, and holding the truth most firmly, be blamed by all, I see which I should choose. Nay, I would go so far, as to be unwilling that the approbation of another's mouth should even increase my joy for any good in me. Yet it does increase it, I own; and not so only, but blame diminishes it. And when I am disturbed at this misery of mine, an excuse suggests itself to me, which what it is worth, Thou God knowest, for I am uncertain about it. For since Thou hast not only given us the precept of continency, that is, from what things we are to keep back our love, but also of righteousness, that is, on what we should

bestow it, and hast not willed that we should love Thee only, but also our neighbour, I ofttimes seem to myself, when gratified by intelligent praise, to be gratified with the improvement of my neighbour or with the hope of his good: and, on the other hand, to be grieved for the evil in him, when I hear him blame either what he does not understand, or what is evidently good. Moreover, I am sometimes grieved at my own praises, either when those things are praised in me in which I am displeasing to myself, or when goods lesser and inconsiderable, are accounted of more value than they ought. But again, how do I know whether I do not feel thus, because I dislike the one who praises me to differ from me in opinion about myself; not that I am at all concerned for his sake, but because the same goods which please me in myself have an additional charm when they please another also? For, in a certain manner, I am not praised when my judgment of myself is not praised, since either those things are praised which displease me, or those things are praised more which please me less. Do I not therefore stand in doubt of myself about this thing?

Behold, in Thee, O Truth, do I see, that I ought not to be moved at my praises for my own sake,[1] but for the benefit of my neighbour. And whether it be so in my case I know not. Herein I know less of myself

[1] In many places S. Augustine dwells upon the vice of vainglory. Thus in "The City of God" he says, "So is this vice an enemy to pious faith, if the desire for praise be greater in the heart than the fear or love of God, that the Lord said, 'How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not *the* honour that cometh from God only?'"

than Thou dost. I beseech Thee, my God, to reveal myself to myself also, that I may confess to my brethren who will pray for me what in me I shall find diseased. Again, let me examine myself more diligently. If I am moved by the consideration of my neighbour's good when I am praised, why am I less moved if some other man be unjustly blamed, than if I am myself? Why am I wounded by that reproach which is cast upon myself, more than by that cast at another with the same injustice, in my presence? Can I say that I am ignorant of this also? or is it that in the end "I deceive myself,"[1] and do not act truly in Thy Presence in my heart and with my tongue? Such madness, O Lord, do Thou put far from me, "that my own mouth may not be to me the oil of the sinner to anoint my head."[2] "I am poor and needy,"[3] and better, while with secret groanings I am dissatisfied with myself, and seek Thy Mercy, until my defect be supplied and I be perfected, even unto that peace of which the eye of the proud has no experience.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

What Danger there is to Virtue from Vain-glory.

BUT the word which comes forth out of the mouth, and the deeds that are manifest to men, have a most dangerous temptation through the love of praise; which, for a certain self-exaltation, strives to procure the applause of others. It tempts, even when I condemn it in myself, and from the very fact that it is condemned; and often glories more vainly in the very

[1] Gal. vi. 3. [2] Ps. cxli. 5. [3] Ps. cix. 22.

contempt of vain-glory; and therefore it ceases to be contempt of vain-glory, whereof it glories; for it does not really contemn it when it so glories.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The Power and Nature of Self-love.

WITHIN, yea within, there is another evil in the very same kind of temptation, whereby they become vain who are self-complacent, and are indifferent as to whether they please or do not please others, so long as they are pleased with themselves. But by this self-complacency they greatly displease Thee, not merely when they delight in things not good as if goods, but also in goods which are Thine, as if they were their own; or even if in Thine, yet as attributing them to their own merits; or again admitting that they are from Thy Grace, yet not rejoicing in them in fellowship with others, but envying that grace to others. In all these, and similar dangers and distresses, Thou seest the trembling of my heart; and I am more sensible that my wounds are healed by Thee than that they are not inflicted on me.

CHAPTER XL.

How he sought after God in himself and in other Things.

WHEN hast Thou not walked with me, O Truth, teaching me what to avoid and what to desire, when I referred to Thee all that I could see in this lower

world, and consulted Thee thereon? I have examined this outer world, as far as my senses could reach, and observed the life which my body has from me, and these my senses. Then I entered within into the recesses of my memory, its manifold halls, filled in wondrous ways with countless stores; and I considered, and was awed, and could discern none of them without Thee, and yet found I none of them to be Thee. No, nor I myself the discoverer, who went over them all, and attempted to estimate and distinguish everything according to its dignity, accepting some things from the messages of the senses, and questioning about others which were mixed up with my inward consciousness, distinguishing and numbering the messengers themselves, and in the vast resources of my memory examining some things, laying up others, drawing out others. No, nor was I myself when I did this, that is, that power of mine whereby I did it, neither was it Thou, for Thou art that abiding Light, Which I consulted about all these things, what they were, and what their value; and I heard Thee instructing and directing me. And often I do this; this delights me, and as often as I can get relaxation from necessary duties, I repair to this pleasure. Nor in all these, which I run over consulting Thee, do I find any refuge for my soul but in Thee, in Whom my scattered powers are united; nor does aught of my being recede from Thee. And sometimes dost Thou admit me to an affection, most rare and deep, to an ineffable sweetness, which if it were perfected in me, I know not what could hereafter be which this life would not be now. But I sink back through the weight of my misery into things below,

and am re-absorbed by my former habits, and am held, and weep much, yet am much held. So greatly does the weight of custom press me down! Here I can be, but do not will to be; there I will to be, but cannot be; either way, miserable.

CHAPTER XLI.

The threefold Evil Desire.

THUS have I considered the diseases of my sins in that threefold lust, and have called upon Thy Right Hand to save me. For Thy Radiance have I seen with a wounded heart, and being beaten back, I said, "Who can ever attain unto it? I am cast away from the sight of Thine Eyes."[1] Thou art the Truth presiding over all things; but I through my covetousness was not willing to lose Thee, but with Thee wanted also to possess a lie; for no one wishes so to lie as to be himself ignorant of the truth. So then I lost Thee, because Thou deignest not to be possessed together with a lie.

CHAPTER XLII.

Some unhappily have recourse to Demons, as Mediators, by whom to return to God.

WHOM may I find to reconcile me to Thee? was I to have recourse to the Angels? by what prayer? by what sacraments? Many striving to return to Thee, and not being able of themselves, as I hear,

[1] Ps. xxxi. 22.

have tried this way, and have fallen into a longing after curious visions, and were accounted worthy of such illusions. For they, puffed up, sought Thee by the pride of learning, elevating rather than beating their breasts, and, by the likeness of dispositions, drew to themselves as conspirators and companions in their pride "the powers of the air,"[1] by whom, through magical influences, they were deceived, seeking a mediator, through whom they might be purified,—and there was none. For it was the "devil," "transforming himself into an angel of light."[2] And great allurement was it to proud flesh, that he had no body of flesh. For they were mortal, and sinners; but Thou, O Lord, to Whom they proudly sought to be reconciled, art immortal and sinless. But "a mediator between God and man"[3] should have something like to God, something like to man; lest being in both like to man, he should be far from God: or if in both like to God, he should be far from man, and so would not be a mediator. That false mediator then, by whom, in Thy secret judgments, pride deserved to be deluded, has one thing in common with man, that is, sin; another, he wills to appear to have in common with God, that not being clothed with mortal flesh, he might pass himself off as immortal. But seeing that "the wages of sin is death,"[4] he has this in common with men, from whence with them he should be condemned to death.

[1] Eph. ii. 2.
[2] 2 Cor. xi. 14.
[3] 1 Tim. ii. 5.
[4] Rom. vi. 23.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Christ, the True Mediator.

BUT the True Mediator, Whom Thou in Thy secret Mercy hast revealed to the humble, and hast sent, that by His example also they might learn humility, that "Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus," has appeared between mortal sinners and the Immortal Just One,[1] sharing mortality with man, righteousness with God; that because the wages of righteousness is life and peace, He might, by His righteousness allied to God, cancel that death of justified sinners, which He willed to share in common with them. Hence He was revealed to the Saints of old, that so they, by believing in His future Passion, might be saved, as we who believe in it as a past event. For inasmuch as He was Man, so far was He Mediator; but inasmuch as He was the Word, He could occupy no middle place, because He was equal to God, and God with God, and at the same time One God.

How hast Thou loved us, O good Father, Who "sparedst not Thine only Son, but deliveredst Him up for us ungodly"![2] How hast Thou loved us, for

[1] Although sinless, "He held a sort of middle place between innocence and sin," "being righteous in reality but a sinner in appearance:" righteous, that He might be able to justify sinners; "in the likeness of sinful flesh," that He might bear the penalties of the sinner. The Manichæans had interpreted "the likeness" of sinful flesh to mean, that the Flesh of Christ was only an appearance and not a reality.

[2] *Rom.* viii. 32.

whom He Who "thought it no robbery to be equal with Thee, was made subject even to the death of the Cross;"[1] He alone "free among the dead,"[2] "having power to lay down His life, and power to take it again;"[3] in our behalf to Thee both Victor and Victim, and therefore Victor because Victim; in our behalf to Thee both Priest and Sacrifice, and therefore Priest because Sacrifice; making us out of servants to become Thy sons, by being Himself born Thy Son, and becoming our servant. Justly then is my hope firm in Him, that Thou "wilt heal all my sicknesses" through Him Who "sitteth at Thy Right Hand and maketh intercession for us;"[4] otherwise I should despair. For many and great are these same diseases, yes, many and great; but Thy medicine is greater. We might have thought Thy Word was too far removed from any union with man, and have despaired of ourselves, had He not been "made flesh and dwelt among us."[5]

Terrified by my sins and by the weight of my misery, I had deliberated in my heart, and had planned that I would flee into a solitary place, but Thou didst not suffer me, and Thou didst encourage me, saying, "Therefore Christ died for all, that they which live may now no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him That died for them."[6] Behold, Lord, I cast all my care upon Thee, that I may live, and "consider the wondrous things of Thy Law."[7] Thou knowest my inexperience and my weakness; teach me, and heal me. He,—Thine Only One,—"in Whom are hid all the

[1] Phil. ii. 6. [2] Ps. lxxxviii. 5. [3] John x. 18.
[4] Rom. viii. 34. [5] John i. 14. [6] 2 Cor. v. 15.
[7] Ps. cxix. 18.

treasures of wisdom and knowledge,"[1] hath redeemed me. Let not the proud reproach me; for I muse on the price of My Ransom, which I eat and drink and communicate to others; and being "poor," I desire to be filled therewith, amongst those who "eat and are satisfied,"[2] and "praise the Lord that seek Him."[3]

[1] Col. ii. 3.

[2] Ps. xxii. 26. S. Augustine interprets Ps. xxii. 28, 32, of the Holy Eucharist. The "poor" represent "the humble and despisers of this world;" "the rich," he says, "are not satisfied, because they do not hunger for the Supper and Passion of the Lord," "they 'adore' but do not imitate," "they go down to the dust," that is, "those who love earthly things, shall fall, because they receive unworthily." But the poor shall praise Him, and their hearts shall live for ever.

[3] The "Confessions" as an autobiography end with this Book. The three remaining Books deal chiefly with the Mosaic account of the Creation, which S. Augustine interprets in a spiritual and mystical sense.

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